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## Professors in the Trenches: Deployed Soldiers and Social Science Academics

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Foreign Military Studies Office

*“How do I come to know what I didn’t know I needed to know?”*

This compilation of articles originally appeared as a *five-part series* by *Small Wars Journal*. Each article was co-authored by one Army soldier/civilian and one university professor/academic as part of a joint research project. This project and product responds to the Army’s objectives regarding the integration of cultural social sciences into its training and operations.

### Introduction to the Series

The overarching goal of a “Military-Social Science Roundtable”, coupled with a related Delphi research process, is to boost, broaden, and render more viable the relationship between the military and academic fields of cultural studies in a way that benefits both communities. Specifically, the Roundtable and Delphi research process should foster a level of cooperation between these communities which assists tactical military units as well as military/political decision makers to ask the right questions in order to conduct full spectrum operations in unfamiliar cultural settings. The process and the venue of such cooperative roundtable conferences is intended to improve not only military long-term capabilities but also bring academic social science thinking into real world challenges.

The concept for the Military-Social Science roundtable and its associated Delphi process arose out of three common areas of interest. In the spring of 2007, the Command and General Staff College’s Center for Army Tactics (CGSC-CTAC) was seeking further perspectives and input from culturally-focused social science experts in order to enhance its training and research. CTAC was also engaged with many CGSC faculty members and students who had returned from Iraq, Afghanistan, or other combat zones, and who wanted a venue through which they could share unique observations regarding their deployment and interaction with foreign populations. Concurrently, the Training and Doctrine Command’s (TRADOC) Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO) was interested in further opportunities to leverage resources from its network of academics and foreign security specialists against the warfighter’s need for intercultural capabilities. A third impetus to hold such cooperative roundtables stemmed from academe -- specifically within the social science community -- where there are a number of very knowledgeable and experienced individuals who believe in applying their disciplines to prevent

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unnecessary casualties. This is especially important in an era where conflicts are raging in a number of different geographical as well as cultural environments, revealing a need to explore areas where cultural, social science studies may benefit today's decision makers from the tactical to strategic level.

The confluence of these three areas of interest prompted CTAC and FMSO to jointly develop and host a roundtable and Delphi process at Fort Leavenworth. CTAC found the military participants and FMSO found the academic participants. The nearby University of Kansas – particularly its military supporters with longstanding ties to FMSO and the Combined Arms Center (CAC) – became a local partner in the event.

The primary objective of the roundtable was to publish one or more papers – written together by the participants – that address two related topics:

1. Unique and/or common experiences in Afghanistan, Iraq, or other areas of operations that may help define the military's need for culturally-related social science training, information, and/or methodologies.
2. The possible way ahead for “military anthropology”, military and cultural geography, and related culturally focused social science disciplines in terms of research, development, and cooperation that could benefit the military at multiple levels; i.e., from the Soldier level to senior planning staffs.

To meet this objective, four military personnel were each asked to write a paper on their – or their unit's – experience interfacing with a local population while deployed. The paper was to focus on: mission challenges stemming from cultural differences between the Soldiers and the indigenous population, how the Soldier or the unit adapted to those challenges, and whether these adaptations were successful.

This marked the beginning of the Delphi portion of the event. The Delphi method is an iterative process used to collect and distill the judgments of experts using a series of questions interspersed with feedback. The questions are designed to focus on problems, opportunities, solutions, or forecasts. Each subsequent set of questions is developed based on the results of the previous ones. In this case, each Soldier shared his paper with one academic with whom he was paired. Over a series of weeks or months, the academic asked the Soldier questions regarding the experience about which the Soldier had written, with the intention of investigating the story from a Social Science perspective. As these exchanges occurred, the academic gradually integrated his or her observations into the paper, eventually co-authoring the final text with the Soldier and forming the basis of this book.

On June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007 – literally in the middle of the Delphi process -- all four teams (each consisting of one Soldier and one academic) participated in a one-day “Military-Social Science Roundtable” during which they openly presented and discussed the Soldiers' experiences and the academics' observations. This roundtable was open to the public and facilitated questions and comments from additional attendees. The concept of social scientists and more specifically anthropologists working closely with military veterans -- rather unlikely partners in today's

environment -- drew a fair amount of attention from the academic and military communities, as well as the national and local press.

While there have been numerous conferences and much discourse about “military anthropology” and related concepts, this was one of the first, focused symposiums on this issue with the direct objective to publish one or more substance-filled papers intended to move this field forward. Most conferences or similar events on this topic have focused on sharing ideas, sharing information, and networking; not on publication. Moreover, the papers stemming from this roundtable have the unique credibility of having been written by social scientists -- several of whom are directly affiliated with universities or other DoD services -- in conjunction with experienced military personnel at the Army’s Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth.

These writings – which now comprise the chapters of this book – represent only the beginning of what is hopefully an ever growing appreciation for the extent to which social science and specifically Anthropology can substantially improve a soldier’s ability to stabilize a situation in a hostile environment as well as assist a unit’s capability to deal more viably with a culturally unknown, possibly uncooperative population. Furthermore, such culture-based knowledge will certainly contribute a great deal to a senior decision-maker’s ability to better understand second or third order effects of any course of action/non-action. Cultural fields of study will not provide tactical, operational, strategic, or political planners all the answers they need to know about the environment in question. On the contrary, cultural fields of study will provide these planners the foundation-level context necessary to ask the right questions from the outset rather than erring in their assumptions.

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## **To Change an Army: The Establishment of the Iraqi Center for Military Values, Principles and Leadership**

**Jack D. Kem and Aaron G. Kirby**

### **Introduction**

Field Manual 3-24, the new U.S. Army’s Counterinsurgency Manual, defines culture as a “web of meaning” shared by members of a particular society or group within a society. Culture (ideas, norms, rituals, codes of behavior) provides meaning to individuals within the society (Department of the Army 2006, 3-6). The Counterinsurgency Manual also states:

*Culture might also be described as an “operational code” that is valid for an entire group of people. Culture conditions the individual’s range of action and ideas, including what to do and not do, how to do or not do it, and whom to do it*



*with or not to do it with. Culture also includes under what circumstances the “rules” shift and change. Culture influences how people make judgments about what is right and wrong, assess what is important and unimportant, categorize things, and deal with things that do not fit into existing categories...* (Department of the Army 2006, 3-7).

The purpose for this article is to examine aspects of culture within Iraq. This examination is based on observations of Iraqi civilian translators and American contractors who worked together to develop classes for the Iraqi military in leadership and ethics studies. These classes were designed to change the Iraqi military into a professional organization that is “ethically based, competently led, loyal to the principles of the constitution and accountable to the civilian leadership and people of Iraq” (MNSTC-I 2006, 6). The preparation for this critically important mission provided the vehicle for observing the cultural differences between these two groups (Iraqi translators and American contractors) based on a “snapshot in time” during the summer of 2006.

These observations suggest that there are some cultural differences between Americans and Iraqis that could potentially present barriers to effective change in the Iraqi military. These include learning style preferences, teaching methodologies, the concept of time, the importance of names and titles, the relative importance of values, and historical role models.

## **Background**

One of the initiatives for change within the Iraqi Military in 2006 was to develop a center to reinforce ethical behavior within the Iraqi Military. The Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) was concerned that there had been an emphasis prior to 2006 on developing a “Quantitative Iraqi Security Force (ISF) but not a Qualitative one” (MNSTC-I 2006, 2). In response to this concern, a preliminary assessment of the Iraqi military ethos was conducted from October to December 2005. This assessment consisted of a survey, focus groups of 5-7 personnel, and interviews with key commanders and civilian leaders. Over 470 Iraqi military personnel and 25 senior level Iraq leaders participated in this assessment. Those surveyed and interviewed included personnel from all NCO and Officer ranks from junior sergeant to the Commander of the Iraqi Joint Forces and the Minister of Defense. The

assessment also represents all levels from platoon thru division as well as operational and training units, the Joint Headquarters and Ministry of Defense.

This assessment provided a number of key findings and included:

- Iraqi military leaders understand professional military values
- Iraqi military personnel profess a belief in a values-based Army, but adherence is uneven
- The Iraqi military professional military ethos is neither documented formally nor spoken consistently across breadth and depth of the ISF
- The Iraqi military, both organizationally and individually, is neither reflective nor self-critical
- The Iraqi military frequently employ rigid discipline rather than actively fostering mutual trust
- Iraqi leaders have great faith and confidence in examples they see in Coalition
- Senior Iraq civilian and military leaders recognize need to establish a professional military values & principles and embrace an effort to transform ethical environment of the Iraqi military
- The Iraqi military Officer Corps is skeptical of the western model of Officer-NCO relationship
- The Iraqi military does not understand the Western concept of civil-military relations nor the role of the military in a democracy; distrusts MOD and civilian leadership

The assessment indicated a number of strengths in the new Iraqi Security Forces; survey responses and subsequent discussions with Iraqi leaders at all levels revealed a clear understanding of professional military values. Even though there were some differences that were considered to be attributable to culture and language, ISF personnel indicated a similar understanding of the meaning of such values as military honor, integrity, honesty, courage, etc. The interviews and focus groups revealed a strong positive association with the conduct modeled by the coalition. However, there was some indication that Iraq conduct was different in the presence of the coalition, indicating a double standard on the part of the Iraqis; there was one manner of behavior around coalition members, and a different ethical behavior in the absence of coalition members. As a result, the senior Iraqi leadership recognized that unethical behavior was one of the fundamental weaknesses of Iraqi leadership and that serious efforts must be made to change the ethical culture and climate of the Iraqi military.

Another major issue that emerged was the relationship between commissioned officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs). Commissioned officers did not believe that NCOs should or will ever assume the role played by NCOs serving the armies of western democracies. This was considered to be mostly an issue of class structure, which was reinforced by the differences in educational levels between the two groups. During the focus groups, many of the NCOs frequently complained about the unwillingness of officers (or even more senior NCO) to listen to them; offering advice was simply not considered an option. Conversely, officers – especially junior officers – frequently micromanaged, often doing even the most routine tasks themselves to ensure success.

Finally, all soldiers expressed distrust of civilian leadership in the Ministry of Defense on the survey and during focus group interviews. In the previous regime, the Minister of Defense was a senior military officer (as in the Soviet model); during the time of the assessment, there were also a large number of retired officers in civilian positions within the MOD. The real issue appeared to be that the Iraqi officer corps did not want to take orders from civilians as a matter of “saving face” (CVMPL 2006, 17-21).

In response to the need to develop ethical behavior within the new ISF, the Iraqi Center for Military Values, Principles, and Leadership was created in March 2006. The new Center was given a comprehensive charter:

*The Center for Military Values, Principles and Leadership will develop, implement, monitor and assess training and education systems and programs within the armed forces in order to assist in developing a professional Iraqi Joint Force that is ethically based, competently led, loyal to the principles of the constitution and accountable to the civilian leadership and people of Iraq. (MNSTC-I 2006, 6)*

In order to accomplish this charter, there were a number of objectives that were to be met; these included making changes in organizational structure in the Iraqi military, appreciating the role of Iraqi culture and heritage, defining barriers and resistance to stronger roles for non-commissioned officers, and understanding the impact of corruption on effectiveness within the Iraqi military (MNSTC-I 2006, 12).

To accomplish these objectives, a number of contractors from the United States were hired to assist in developing the initial doctrine and curriculum that would be presented to Iraqi trainers, who would in turn teach the classes throughout the Iraqi military. The teams of Iraqi trainers would teach classes about professional military values, the law of armed conflict, human rights, and the role of a military in a democracy (Garamone 2006). These classes were to be presented to members of the Iraqi military at all levels. “The key is the values of the Iraqi military will be inculcated at every level... It is important to the Iraqi military and the Iraqi people. The army must behave in an ethical and consistent manner to build the Iraqi people's confidence” (Garamone 2006).

The Iraqi military was deeply involved in the planning for the new Center from the beginning. The commander of the Center, Major General (MG) Nabil Abdul Kadir, was designated by the Iraqi Military in March 2006. The Iraqi military cadre at the Center, led by MG Nabil, was responsible for developing the core values of the Iraqi military, which would be the basis for the classes. MG Nabil felt this effort was urgent; “I was gravely concerned to see the behavior of some of the (Iraqi) soldiers in the streets,” he said. “It doesn't go along with our beliefs; it doesn't go with our culture. (The soldiers) are so rude, so ruthless, and it is not acceptable. It is widening the gap between military and civilians. I want to see that gap closed, completely” (Garamone 2006a).

MG Nadir was also aware of the sensitivity of having coalition representatives assist in the development of “Iraqi values.” In response, he was directly involved in procuring “a modest library of books from Iraqi philosophers, thinkers, and leaders to add to the leadership center's



collection” because “many books have been destroyed in the war.” Using these writings would assist him in responding to criticism that Iraq has nothing to learn from the Americans. By using Iraqi texts, he stated “I can say that I am not teaching you American values. They are our values, too” (Mulrine 2006).

In addition to Iraqi military officers serving as the Center Commander and team instructors, Iraqi translators were hired to assist in the coordination between coalition representatives and Iraqi military trainers. These translators were not only essential in translating curriculum and doctrine, but also in understanding and bridging the cultural differences that existed between the two groups. Many of the translators had served in the old Iraqi army; almost all of them had graduate level educations; and most had become translators to make money:

*When I came here, frankly, I was only looking for money," says Danny, one of the Iraqi translators who uses an American name for fear of being killed should his identity become known. "When I found out what they were trying to do here, I thought it was very good for the country. We need to build an Army with not only weapons but with values. To protect the people, the Army must know how to treat the people. (Mulrine 2006)*

The role of the translators was an evolving role; initially they were hired as pure translators – to provide an accurate translation of the prepared doctrine and curriculum into Arabic. The role shifted to that of an interpreter – to provide a “contextually true” interpretation of the doctrine and curriculum from English to Arabic. This role provides greater discretion for the interpreter, since the interpretation may be more of a paraphrase, focusing on the meaning and intent of the interpreted materials – which also requires a greater understanding of the context of the interpreted materials. Because the permanent Iraqi military personnel had not arrived at the Center during the training, the Iraqi translators took on an additional role – that of “associates” who would potentially serve as instructors rather than just translators. This role, of course, granted even greater discretion to the Iraqi translators, as well as an equal status on the teaching team with the U.S. contractors.

The Iraqi Center for Military Values, Principles, and Leadership received a great deal of attention as one of the important coalition initiatives in developing the quality of the new Iraqi military. This part of the coalition plan was intended to be a “more comprehensive engagement with the Iraqis to help them change behaviors while building Iraqi institutions to address the root problems” (Felicetti 2006, 80). This engagement included a variety of initiatives that were directly related to the Center, including the Center establishment, initial classes in a “traveling road show,” doctrine development, curriculum development, curriculum delivery throughout the Iraqi military, conducting further research, conducting assessment and program evaluation, and strategic communications (MNSTC-I 2006, 9-12). There was, however, an expectation that this effort would take considerable time. “Shaping and shifting attitudes can and must be done, but it will take time, resources and, most important, commitment from Iraqis and coalition members” (Garamone 2006). The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), in a 2006 report, stated:



*...the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) has developed and supports an Iraqi Center for Military Values, Principles, and Leadership. Its goal is to inform and influence key leaders, the military, the public, and other ethics compliance organizations. MNSTC-I has established 34 values they intend to convey through the Center. However, there is an expectation that it may take nearly two generations to fully realize these outcomes. According to MNSTC-I officials, they only expect to achieve 5 or 6 of these values during the first 2 to 3 years of the program. (SIGIR 2006, 5)*

## **Support from the Command and General Staff College**

To support the development of the Iraqi Center for Military Values, Principles, and Leadership, a team from the United States Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) deployed to Iraq from Fort Leavenworth, KS. This team consisted of four faculty members; three leadership professors and an ethics subject matter expert. The intent of the team was to provide training in a number of areas: faculty development, leadership studies, and ethics studies.

Each of these three areas posed a particular challenge for the team. Faculty development encompassed teaching the instructional model in use at the Command and General Staff College – the CGSC Experiential Learning Model, or ELM. The ELM serves as the methodology for both lesson plan design at the Command and General Staff College and as the dominant teaching methodology for delivering curriculum. The CGSC Experiential Learning Model is a framework that serves as an “umbrella concept” for different delivery techniques for teaching: seminar instruction, instructor-centric traditional lecture, Socratic questioning, or case studies, to name a few. The CGSC Experiential Learning Model also embodies the underlying premise of the educational philosophy at CGSC: teaching students how to think, rather than what to think. The CGSC Experiential Learning Model is designed to treat subject matter content from a process framework that enables students to identify a problem, develop courses of action or solutions to a problem, test the courses of action or solutions to the problem, and then implement or apply that solution (Kem 2006). Teaching this new methodology was considered a drastic departure from previous educational methodologies in Iraq during the Saddam era, which predominately relied on lecture and rote memorization.

An interesting parallel to the Iraqi experience of democratization is that of Brazil, as noted by Paulo Freire. Freire writes that Brazil had previously been a “closed, colonial, slavocratic, anti-democratic society” (Freire 2002, 21). In order to transition to a democracy, Freire felt that their needed to be reform in the educational process that encouraged critical attitudes (Freire 2002, 33). Freire noted the following about pre-democratic Brazil:

*Our traditional curriculum, disconnected from life, centered on words emptied of the reality they are meant to represent, lacking in concrete activity, could never develop a critical consciousness. Indeed, its own naïve dependence on high-sounding phrases, reliance on rote, and tendency toward abstractness actually intensified our naïvete. (Freire 2002, 37)*

The CGSC Experiential Learning Model draws from the educational theories of Freire, among others (such as Kolb). Freire felt that experiential education was essential for developing a critical consciousness; that you best “learn democracy through the exercise of democracy; for that knowledge, above all others, can only be assimilated experientially” (Freire 2002, 36).

Democracy and democratic education are founded on faith in men, on the belief that they not only can but should discuss the problems of their country, of their continent, their world, their work, and the problems of democracy itself. Education is an act of love, and thus an act of courage. It cannot fear the analysis of reality, or under pain of revealing itself as a farce, avoid creative discussion (Freire 2002, 38).

Teaching leadership – from the Fort Leavenworth perspective – was also considered to be a major challenge for the Iraqis. The Fort Leavenworth leadership studies were taught from the perspective of a values-based organization, with a focus on organizational leadership. The major topic areas that were to be delivered consisted of critical reasoning and creative thinking, leadership development and assessment, cultural awareness, and general leadership studies. Many of these classes were selected based on the survey results and focus groups, although the classes were admittedly adapted from the Fort Leavenworth curriculum and were initially developed for American students. The general leadership studies encompassed a wide variety of subjects, such as the profession of arms, officership, professional military ethics and values, the role of the military in a democracy, and the law of armed conflict and human rights. This wide array of courses was designed in accordance with the Center’s mission to “*developing a professional Iraqi Joint Force that is ethically based, competently led, loyal to the principles of the constitution and accountable to the civilian leadership and people of Iraq*” (MNSTC-I, 2006). These courses were developed to change the organizational culture of the Iraqi military – an enormous change from the Saddam era. Based on the initial surveys and focus groups, two of these areas were considered to be potentially problematic – the role of the NCO in a professional military and accountability to civilian leadership.

Teaching ethics was another area uncovered in the research that needed attention and would prove to be challenging. Our primary focus would be teaching an ethical decision making model that provides moral clarity for the Iraqi military – in sufficient detail to provide guidance for ethical dilemmas, but also simple enough for application at all ranks. This posed a particular challenge since the moral decision making model in use by the Command and General Staff College uses the “ethical triangle,” which incorporates three different ethical systems for analysis: principles-based ethics (based on the writings of Immanuel Kant); consequences-based ethics (based on the writings of John Stuart Mill); and finally virtues-based ethics (based on the writings of Aristotle) (Kem 2006a, 28-34). All three of these ethical systems were based on Western writings, and there was concern whether or not these ethical systems would have the same relevance for the Iraqi audience. The “ethical triangle,” however, is based on the concept of a “unified ethical approach” (Garofalo and Geuras 1999, 95-130) and by Svara’s “ethical triangle” (Svara 2007, 64-72). The key virtue that was emphasized – using the ethical triangle – was based on the concept of justice, consistent with Lawrence Kohlberg’s theories of moral development (Kohlberg, 1981). Kohlberg held that all three of the ethical theories were consistent with his model of moral development, that justice was the universal ethic, and that his model of stage development was “true in all cultures” (Kohlberg 1975, 48).

The team from the Command and General Staff College taught these classes to both the U.S. contractors and the Iraqi translators over a two week period. During these classes, Iraqi military officers (other than the commander, MG Nadir) were not assigned to the Center. The training audience, therefore, was a combination of two disparate groups – U.S. contractors, who were all retired U.S. military officers and noncommissioned officers, and Iraqi translators, most of whom had served in the Iraqi military. Both groups were roughly the same age (40-55), and both groups had roughly the same educational level (graduate level).

## Observations

There were high expectations from all three groups (the team from CGSC, the U.S. contractors, and the Iraqi translators). The expectations were that this core of trainers could help to train up and work with the Iraqi military officers, when assigned, to change the culture of the Iraqi military. The group's optimistic expectations were apparent in this CGSC team member's statement:

*...The country seems hungry for freedom. There are critics who say Arabs cannot handle freedom. If that is true, then why are so many Iraqis dying for freedom? Why are so many risking themselves and their families to serve in the new Iraqi Army?*  
(Garamone 2006b).

During the training, there were a number of issues that were worth noting and revealed both similarities and differences between the U.S. contractors and the Iraqi translators. Here are several of those observations from the viewpoint of one of the CGSC team members, provided in no particular order:

**Money and motivation.** Both of the groups – the contractors and the translators – were initially motivated by the money that could be made by working in the Center – not the opportunity to change the culture of the Iraqi military. Unfortunately, this reflected the values that were driving the motivation of both cultures (American and Iraqi) in the implementation of ethics and values. The contractors from the United States made a great deal of money for their troubles – most made at least \$180K a year for their work at the Center. The Iraqi translators made less, but it was still a job (where there were few jobs) with a significant paycheck. Fortunately, there were a few in both groups who were “true believers” in the cause, and they helped to keep things on track. One or two of the U.S. contractors left after a short period of time to return to the States or to go to another (higher paying) position. Within a year, only two of the U.S. contractors remained with the Center. The Iraqis didn't have such an easy way out; in fact, once the Iraqis had signed on as contract linguists, they really couldn't leave because of the potential danger to themselves and their families.

As the classes progressed, the two groups had a positive impact on each other – like Yin and Yang or Occam's razor, cultures change because they interact with one another (Patriquin 2007, 24). The culture and attitudes of the contractors was just as significant in determining the motivations of the Iraqis as the Iraqis are to the Americans. The dynamic between the two

groups, especially with the influence of the “true believers,” positively influenced the entire group to focus their efforts toward initiating positive changes in the Iraqi military.

***Learning Styles Inventory (LSI).*** Part of the faculty development included taking an instrument known as the Learning Styles Inventory. This inventory instrument, used widely in the United States, indicates the learning style preference in one of four different styles:

- Divergers, learners who acquire knowledge by concrete experience and process knowledge by reflective observation (learn by discovery).
- Assimilators, learners who acquire knowledge by abstract conceptualization and process knowledge by reflective observation (learn by planning and creating theoretical models).
- Convergers, learners who acquire knowledge by abstract conceptualization and process knowledge by active experimentation (learn by practical application and reasoning deductively).
- Accommodators, learners who acquire knowledge by concrete experience and process knowledge by active experimentation (learn by focusing on doing things).

At CGSC, the majority of the students are “assimilators” (planners) and “convergers” (deciders). The U.S. contractors generally fit this mold, which was not surprising since all of them were retired U.S. military. The Iraqi translators, however, represented all four learning styles, which was surprising. The expectation was that the Iraqi translators – who were roughly equivalent to the American contractors in age, education, and military background – would be roughly equivalent in learning styles. Based on the results from the LSI, the differences in learning styles were primarily in terms of the knowledge acquisition, with a greater reliance on concrete experiences rather than abstract conceptualization.

***Experiential Learning Model.*** As a result of the disparate learning styles, the Iraqi translators were generally more receptive to the experiential learning model (ELM) than the U.S. contractors – the ELM methodology, by design, addresses all four learning style preferences. The educational experiences of the two groups were also diverse; the U.S. contractors had all been through the U.S. military education system, and felt that their experiences were successful; therefore, they were generally not receptive to new methods of teaching and generally preferred using lecture. Two of the U.S. contractors were, however, “completely sold” on the experiential learning model; one of the contractors had served as an educator after his retirement, and another of the contractors had been deeply involved in the manning and fielding of the “Stryker Brigade,” an organization that had used the experiential learning model extensively during their fielding and development. The two “receptive” contractors were also least motivated by money and were lifelong learners – and natural teachers.

The Iraqis had experienced a different system. On more than one occasion the Iraqi translators expressed excitement with a system of learning that wasn’t based on lecture and encouraged active participation in classes. One of the Iraqi translators confided that he didn’t trust Iraqi physicians who had been educated after the Ba’athists came to power because of social promotion and the lack of active education; he felt that the new doctors had just attended classes but had learned nothing. “The system was corrupt; no teacher could fail a student and no student could be considered a failure.”

Since the CGSC team used the experiential learning model as the way to teach, they modeled the ELM as they taught all their classes. After the first day, it was apparent that the Iraqi translators “got it” – they were active participants in every class, asked a wide variety of questions, and provided their own assessment of each of the classes. Many of the U.S. contractors were impatient and wanted the classes to move along; they were looking for a lecture and were frustrated when it wasn’t given.

***Concept of Time.*** The concept of time was generally determined to be an area of cultural differences between the two groups. Generally, the U.S. contractors had a great desire to get started on time, “get ‘er done,” and then call it a day. The Iraqis had a different concept; they were rarely on time to start, but then in no hurry to finish. Even during breaks the Iraqis wanted to continue discussions and to follow up... but then would not be ready when it was time to start back. This was no surprise because of the cultural differences regarding the concept of time. These differences were pronounced, which required considerable time spent “herding” both groups in an attempt to begin class again at roughly the same time. The instructional format and schedule was altered and relaxed to accommodate this difference and to capitalize on the genuine desire of the Iraqis to learn as much as possible. The Iraqi translator’s emphasis on conversation, coupled with an apparent disregard for schedules, was accepted as a reflection of a different set of priorities – a priority to learn and reflect on the material rather than on a priority of getting through the classes.

***Names and titles...and their importance.*** One of the big differences between the two groups was the importance given to names and titles. The U.S. contractors were retired military, whose retired ranks ranged from Master Sergeant to full Colonel. Without exception, all of the contractors called each other by first name and avoided any reference to retired rank; two of the CGSC faculty members had doctorates, but they were rarely called by their title of “Dr” (with the exception of the pet name “Dr. Doom”). The Iraqis were completely different; one of the Iraqi translators had served in the Iraqi military as a Major and had the reputation of a war hero. Even though he was no longer a Major (the military he had served was dissolved), he received deference from all of the other Iraqi translators. When MG Nadir came around, he was given great deference as well.

The Iraqis also shared a particular honor – to be known and called as the father of your son was a particular honor (“father of Ahmet”). When one of the Iraqi translators wanted to show particular honor to one of the other translators, this term of reference was used – and noted by all the others. One of the translators provided clarification; he said that this term indicated that the father was honored by having such a noteworthy son, and that this indicated the greatness of the father. The family term of reference took precedence over military ranks, which indicated the greater value given to families than to the military.

***Troubling Examples and the Rule of Law.*** During the discussion of the rule of law, the Iraqi translators were quite open in their questions of how the United States would deal with troubling examples that violated the rule of law, especially the Haditha situation and Abu Ghraib. Interestingly, the Iraqi translators were not as disturbed by these events as the American contractors were, but they were greatly interested in our reaction. The Iraqi translators wanted to

know how we would deal with these situations – and how we could teach about the rule of law when we had so many apparent violations of law within the U.S. military. The Iraqi translators didn't seem to be accusatory, but rather troubled that the U.S. could say one thing (rule of law) and then act in another way. For the most part, the reaction of the U.S. contractors was to dismiss these situations as anomalies and exceptions, which didn't satisfy the Iraqi translators, who were disappointed at the attitudes of the American contractors.

The Iraqi translators understood only after the situations were described as violations of the rule of law – which requires a deliberate investigation, due process, and representation by counsel. This acceptance was particularly influenced by the trial of Saddam Hussein, which was ongoing during the classes and watched carefully by all of the Iraqi translators. All felt that Saddam Hussein was guilty, but there was an understanding that the trial was necessary – he had to be allowed to present a defense and evidence had to be presented before a verdict could be given. When the explanation stated that the same process needed to be followed for those at Haditha and Abu Ghraib, the Iraqi translators understood. The concept of “justice” resonated; all of the Iraqi translators also knew Iraqi history and were familiar with the Code of Hammurabi. The concept of “justice” for the Iraqis, however, appeared to have a different basis than the American concept of justice. The Iraqi concept of justice didn't include the moderating influence of the concept of mercy; justice seemed to be based on “getting what you deserve.” For punishment to be fair and just, it had to be equally administered. The concept of giving mercy – of considering mitigating factors or of showing compassion – seemed to indicate weakness or some level of corruption.

The Iraqi Constitution had also been recently approved by the vast majority of the Iraqis. Relating the concepts of the Rule of Law to the Iraqi Constitution was extremely important. The CGSC team analyzed the Iraqi Constitution and found that it provided great insight into what the Iraqis felt was important. One of the key passages from the Iraqi Constitution integrated into the classes being developed was Article 9(1a):

*The Iraqi armed forces and security services will be composed of the components of the Iraqi people with due consideration given to their balance and representation without discrimination or exclusion. They shall be subject to the control of the civilian authority, shall defend Iraq, shall not be used as an instrument to oppress the Iraqi people, shall not interfere in the political affairs, and shall have no role in the transfer of authority (IECIRAQ 2005, 4).*

A further analysis of the Iraqi Constitution revealed the relative importance of some of the key values that were ascribed by the Iraqis. The terms “democracy” and “duty” appeared only two times for each term in the 43 page document; “loyalty” appeared only once and “mercy” was absent from the document. The term “rights” appeared 18 times and “freedom” appeared 12 times (IECIRAQ 2005). “Just” and “justice” appears in the Iraqi Constitution 13 times. One of the CGSC team members stated:

*You also must teach respect for other people and other viewpoints and why that is important, he said. Iraqis also have to understand what their constitution says and what*

*it guarantees. The military needs to understand not only what (the Iraqi constitution) says, but why it says that. It's really a remarkable document (Garamone 2006b).*

**Democracy vs. Justice (Values).** The concept of “democracy” was somewhat troublesome for the Iraqis. They couldn’t seem to fully grasp this notion in terms of a western liberal regime, with all of the checks and balances in a fully developed democracy, but rather they were focused on the concept of majority rule. The value (or virtue) that resonated most in Iraq was justice; justice that had a personal impact. During the time of the training, there was a great deal of sectarian violence taking place in Baghdad, which included capturing members of other sects. Torture by some of the most gruesome methods was rampant; explaining how this was just not right didn’t have much of an impact on the Iraqi translators – they seemed to accept it as a fact of life. Explaining how torture was unjust in personal terms made a difference in their perception of torture. Relating the inhumanity of this type of treatment against another human being – such as to your son or your mother – brought this home. Creating a vision where your family could walk down the road without fear from being harmed by others was a motivator for making changes – but those changes had to be understood in terms of the direct impact to the Iraqi’s family or group. Unfortunately, we couldn’t determine whether or not this understanding was based on a short-term, immediate sympathetic response or whether this was fully understood and retained.

All of the Iraqi translators had seen the image of the Iraqi woman with her purple finger in the air after voting – a sign of taking a stand for a better future. The Iraqi translators seemed to understand the importance of how an Iraqi woman could take a stand to make Iraq better for her children; they also understood fully when this type of courage was compared to the courage they would need to make changes in the Iraqi military, one unit at a time. The use of this type of strong imagery helped to reinforce the concepts of democracy and justice for the Iraqi translators. The U.S. contractors seemed to have an abstract perspective that their actions could change the Middle East and the world; the Iraqi translators were more concrete and wanted to see how their actions could change the lives of their children and family. Interestingly, the preference for abstract conceptualization by the U.S. contractors was consistent with their learning styles.

**Role Models.** As part of the preparation for preparing curriculum for the Iraqi military, the CGSC team conducted research with the Iraqi translators in a number of areas. Many of the case studies in the Fort Leavenworth CGSC curriculum are based on the actions of key leaders, such as George Washington, George C. Marshall, and Matthew Ridgway. When the CGSC team asked the Iraqi translators for great Iraqi leaders to use as examples, the translators couldn’t come up with a single noteworthy example without going back thousands of years (such as Nebuchadnezzar and Hammurabi). Besides the long time frames, most of these examples left a lot to be desired.

The lack of role models for the Iraqis extended beyond military and political role models; this inability to describe role models extended into areas such as writers, sports figures, and entertainment personalities. It is unknown whether this was due to a translation issue (an inability to grasp the symbolic magnitude of Western icons) or a reflection of how important



history is on Iraqi modern life – or just an unwillingness of the Iraqis to share that particular part of their culture.

***Pride in work and a job well done.*** As part of the deployment to Iraq, the CGSC team stayed on the base and lived in what had previously been officer's quarters for the Iraqi military. Besides having Iraqi linguists, the Center also had a number of Iraqis who were responsible for the upkeep of the facility. This included cutting the grass, cleaning vehicles, and keeping the place clean. At the end of ground combat, the facility was in sad shape, but was markedly improving because of the hard work of these Iraqi laborers. During the evenings, one of the CGSC faculty members started to clean up around the buildings; this was a huge embarrassment to these laborers, who asked the CGSC team member to let them do it. By the morning, all of the area had been fully mowed and cleaned up, and the laborers were outside to show off their hard work. There was a great deal of pride in doing their job and doing it well – and an appreciation when the job was properly inspected and praised. This did not appear to be motivated by shame, but rather by pride.

## **Analysis and Conclusions**

The experience at the Iraqi Center for Military Values, Principles, and Leadership was an interesting experience in cultural differences and similarities. The impact of history, culture, societal institutions, and individual differences was apparent, especially when considering the issues of ethics and leadership. The use of the Experiential Learning Model, which incorporates all learning style preferences, appeared to be an appropriate methodology for influencing change within the Iraqi military.

The impact of history can have a counterintuitive effect – because of the history of the Saddam era, the Iraqi translators were more receptive to change and new approaches; rather than being fixated on the old ways, they embraced new and promising methods. The repercussions of the old Ba'athist regime on learning, stigmas, standards and methods could also “re-appear” once the situation in Iraq stabilizes, which could be a potential barrier to future learning (regressing toward the mean). MG Nabil's comments about Iraqi soldiers (“so rude, so ruthless ... not acceptable”) indicated that the reaction to the changes in Iraq can also be negative, and that old behaviors from the previous regime can quickly re-appear.

The Iraqi military appears to have a number of structural issues that are worth further research. The initial surveys and focus groups indicated a lack of trust in the noncommissioned officer corps, as well as a tendency towards micromanagement by officers. These particular findings pose significant problems in the development of a professional military. The dynamic of officers – particularly junior officers, micromanaging may be due to a number of factors: the inexperience of the officers in a new Iraqi military; class orientation; or as a security issue. Junior officer micromanagement and the distrust between the civilian government and the military may well be a cultural extension of security and manifestation of the tendency towards compartmentalization of society in order to retain power within an exceptionally variable environment. The lack of trust between the military and civilian authorities could also be a reflection of the lack of confidence in the American model of unification.

In teaching ethics, there was an initial assumption that Iraqi culture would assess “moral” dilemmas in the same manner that Americans do, based on Kohlberg’s theories of moral development. In the past twenty years there has been some criticism of Kohlberg’s assertions of moral universalism and the invariant progression of moral development (Jasinska-Kania 1988; Stewart, Sprinthall, and Kem 2002; Shweder, Mahapatra and Miller 1990, 194). Although there was no evidence that these issues affected the understanding of the Iraqi translators during the ethics classes, these areas merit further research.

The orientation for the Iraqis was clearly on concrete issues, and on the impact their actions could have on their families and those closest to them. The Iraqi translators focused on the immediate short-term mission of preparing to teach classes and doctrine development; a shared long-term vision of the future of Iraq just didn’t seem apparent. This was consistent with the results from the Learning Styles Inventory (LSI), which suggested that the Iraqi translators had a greater reliance on concrete acquisition of knowledge than the American contractors. Money as a motivator also suggested a short-term orientation for both groups.

According to the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), there were 34 values that had been developed, but MNSTC-I officials only expected “to achieve 5 or 6 of these values during the first 2 to 3 years of the program” (SIGIR 2006, 5). It is unknown which of those values were expected to be emphasized, however, the issue of justice and the rule of law resonated with the Iraqi translators; having a body of law and a constitution that was developed by Iraqis has great meaning and is a source of pride. Many of the other values that were discussed (such as respect) had a different conceptual framework for the Iraqis; the issue of torture and sectarian violence had to be personalized to have relevance, as opposed to being an issue of respect for other human beings. The concept of a “unified ethical theory” and its applicability to the Iraqi culture is an area that may still need further investigation. Most importantly, the changes in the Iraqi military must come from the Iraqis themselves. One of the disheartening issues of the training in Iraq was the fact that none of the Iraqi military (other than the commander) had been assigned to this important task. The Iraqi translators were willing to “step up” to the challenge and support teaching the classes to the Iraqi military, but the question remained as to whether they would be accepted in this role, especially by those who considered themselves “senior” in rank to the translators. The use of the Experiential Learning Model helped to reinforce this commitment, based on the underlying premise that students are responsible for their own education. It follows that changing the Iraqi military, therefore, is the responsibility of the Iraqis themselves. This commitment must be shared by all the Iraqi military and leadership, backed up with appropriate assignment of personnel to support this effort. As MG Nabil stated:

*This is my country. This is my army. My father served in the army, as did two brothers - one of whom was killed. We simply are an army family and I am completely committed to the reform of the institution (Garamone 2006a).*

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# **Civil-Affairs Confronts the “Weapon of the Weak”: Improvised Explosive Devices in Iraq**

**Bartholomew Dean, Charles K. Bartles and Timothy B. Berger**

*A bomber’s imagination is the only limiting factor in the use of explosives (FM 3-19.15, 11)*<sup>i</sup>

In the elaboration of this essay, the authors have born in mind the need to inform Soldiers, scholars, policy makers, and the broader public at large, about a non-lethal military tactic that responded to the threat of “weapons of the weak” in rural Iraq, namely improvised explosive devices, commonly called IED’s.<sup>ii</sup> While we readily concede the inherent limitations of the anti-IED tactic described below, it is argued that anthropological insight is vital to understanding the nature of power,<sup>iii</sup> which is essential for formulating clear rules of engagement for civil-military operations (CMO). This point is of particular import given that significant sectors of the US public, as well as the international community, have persuasively brought into question the oversight and administration of security services in theaters of operation, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, which many believe to be woefully inadequate. Anthropology provides us with the best vantage point for studying military operations in peacekeeping and in times of war, chaos and great human suffering.

A civil-military, non-lethal approach to the threat of IED activity (pre- and post-detonation) is, we posit, a viable strategy to responding to the changing character of contemporary armed conflict, including the multifaceted nature of terror<sup>iv</sup>. By no means a panacea for dealing with all IED activity, the tactic outlined below does provide us with useful clues to the complexities of armed conflict, as well as an actual case study that manifests the challenges posed by the US military’s lack of cultural and linguistic skills necessary to sustain an effective, long-term anti-IED campaign in Iraq.

Like other scholars of the sciences of humanity, it is now customary for socio-cultural anthropologists to hold an opinion about “the war,” as Brown and Lutz (2007) have written, and to feel that their anthropological informed “view” is worthy of an audience. Brown and Lutz commendably exhort anthropological practitioners who hold an opinion on “the war” to recall that, “opinions are more informed, nuanced, and will carry further if they are shaped by the kind of close, yet open-minded, encounters with ground-level realities, and practice, whose importance we, and our disciplinary forebears, have worked so hard to promote” (2007:327). To understand is not to condone: rather than a polemical apology for “the war” we have drafted this essay precisely in the spirit of anthropological inquiry advocated by Brown and Lutz; we have striven to pay attention not only to “ground level realities,” but also to grapple with the tactical, ethical, and strategic implications of anti-IED measures through an analysis of a concrete civil-military operation in Iraq (Operation Turkey Stomp). With this in mind, we seek to provide insight useful for multiple audiences:--Soldiers, policy makers, scholars, and the public at large--in their efforts at clarifying the terms and actual consequences of vitally consequential issues before us all.

## **Civil Affairs & IEDs**

Civil affairs (CA)<sup>v</sup> special operations units are foundational to the U.S. Armed Forces' capacity to effectively engage in civil-military operations (CMO, e.g. Haiti, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, Iraq, etc.). CA responds directly to the varied challenges to US interests through conducting CMO. Civil Affairs units provide essential support to military commanders by collaborating with civil leaders and civilian populations<sup>vi</sup> in the commander's arena of operations. In an effort to mitigate the unintended consequences of civil-military operations<sup>vii</sup> (e.g. collateral damage, political "blowback", civil disturbances, reinforcement of factionalisms, exacerbation of local/regional rifts or lasting hostility to the military intervention) and to promote efforts oriented to the overall mission success, CA units serve as the primary interlocutors between the civilian inhabitants of a war zone, region of catastrophe, or occupied territory, and the prevailing military presence (multinational or otherwise).

The very character and key dynamics of specific CMOs are inevitably wrought by the specific circumstances of military intervention, and the very nature of the Area of Operations (AO), both in terms of the diversity of the geographic and human terrains. The experience of US military participation in an international peacekeeping initiative (which ostensibly functions as a neutral entity), is significantly different then when it participates in humanitarian intervention (such as in Somalia, where it has been perceived by some local sectors as a belligerent force), or directly as an occupying power, as in the case of Iraq. Because CA operations emphasize the fluid relationship between the civil and military environments, legitimacy and credibility are key aspects of the micro-politics of "glocalized" power.<sup>viii</sup> Therefore, "respect for the dignity, pride, and culture<sup>ix</sup> of the populace are fundamental to maintaining legitimacy and credibility" (*FM 41-10* 2000). In short, CA units must, "consider the perceptions of the local populace to military events" (*FM 41-10* 2000).

CAs are charged with keeping the local commander abreast of the dynamic, and ever changing status of the civilian populace, as well as help local representatives of civil society by coordinating military operations with state (including IGO's), and non-state actors (community authorities, regional leaders foreign forces, and NGOs), and through the distribution of humanitarian aid and basic or primary supplies necessary for communal well-being. Those units dedicated to formulate and implement CA actions are lead by Joint Force Commanders (JFCs) who incorporate civil affairs units with a plethora of other key military components (such as maneuver, military policing, provision of health service, engineering, transport of basic supplies, humanitarian aid, mobility operations, etc.), and the needs of USG agencies, IGOs, NGOs, and other civilian institutions in the region (both governmental and nongovernmental actors) in a concerted effort to provide the capabilities necessary for successful CMO. According to the U.S. Armed Forces' manual on *Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Operations*, "international law contains provisions as to the authorities of the occupying power and the obligations of the submitting government." Moreover, "the exercise of executive, legislative, and judicial authority by the occupying power will be determined by policy decisions at the highest level and may even involve an international policy making group" (*Joint Publication 3-57*, 2001).

Notwithstanding this clear assertion of the potential need for international participation in military operations of occupation, *Joint Publication 3-57* unequivocally states that, "a sound local administration is developed, always subject to the authority of the occupying power."<sup>x</sup>

Consistent with the *Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Operations*, emphasis on CA actions has moved from measures intended to satisfy short-range goals to consider long-range plans designed to ensure successful CMO. Operation Turkey Stomp (OTS) is a manifestation of the doctrinal shift or “revolution” in the doctrinal articulation of current “counter insurgency” methods (Heuser 2007; Fowler 2005; Shultz and Dew 2006; Cassidy 2006; cf. Trinquier 1961; Galula 1964), whose efficacy can be interpreted from a number of scholarly frames: tactically, strategically, socially, legally--i.e., ethically.

In contrast to the Westphalian nation’s expression of peace<sup>xi</sup> and doctrines of “just war” (*jus ad bellum*--morally legitimate)--“He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword”--as echoed by the Dutch philosopher Hugo Grotius in his 1625 text *De jure belli ac pacis libri tres* (*On the Laws of War and Peace*), postcolonial, post Cold war nation’s criteria for engaging in warfare have shifted to determinations of *jus in bello* (the moral conduct of war) and to considerations of the *legitimate use of force* (Roberts and Guelff 2000). Two of the essential conditions of the “just cause of war” theory are that the force used be “proportional” to the just cause the war is supposed to be driven by, and that combatants be discriminated from noncombatant civilians, who are not to be targeted or killed. Derivative of a long and illustrious intellectual legacy--articulated in the nascent Christian Church; further elaborated by St. Augustine; and crystallized in Grotius’ 17<sup>th</sup> century figurations, “just cause of war” theory has remained central in the discursive architecture of debates over nuclear armaments (and other WMD, including biological and chemical agents), as well as the contentious nature of “humanitarian intervention” and “peace keeping missions” (e.g. the Balkans; Rwanda; Liberia; Somalia; Haiti, etc.).

Consistent with U.S. Armed Forces’ *Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Operations* (which was published before the events of 9/11/2001), “nations”--in the Westphalian sense--“may [now] be required to conduct civil administration activities across the range of military operations, acting on the authority of a nation, alliance, of nations, or the UN.” According to international law, including: the four Geneva Conventions of 1949--and the Additional Protocols of 1977; the 1980 UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons--as well as customary international law (such as the Hague Regulations of 1899 and 1907, especially Conv. IV on Laws and Customs of War on Land; Geneva Protocol of 1925 banning gas and bacteriological weapons, and the 1997 Ottawa Convention prohibiting anti-personal mines), the occupying military force has an obligation to, “ensure public order and safety and the just and effective administration of, and support to, a hostile or occupied territory.” As such, the occupying military force, “must maintain an orderly government in the occupied territory and must have, as its ultimate goal, the creation of an effective civilian government” (*Joint Publication 3-57*, 2001). In this regard the CA’s JFC is charged with determining which military operations are most likely to amplify tensions in the occupied territory, while simultaneously ascertaining which actions are likely to promote and accelerate the return to a civil administration of the occupied territory.

This is particularly crucial in “multi-cultural environments”, or pluri-ethnic theaters of operations, “where a chosen COA [chief administrative officer] will almost invariably be seen as partisan by one or more of the parties to a conflict” (*Joint Publication 3-57*, 2001). Moreover, the vagaries of national (or sub-national) identities and contestations over citizenship (Dean and Levi 2004) have exacerbated the complexities of CMO. Indeed, Anglo-Saxon notions of the



public welfare entitlements associated with the Marshallian concept of citizenship predicated on labor, war and reproduction have been undermined by the multiplex impulses of globalization (Marshall 1950; cf. Inda and Rosaldo), and the cacophonous languages of national belonging or displacement (Anderson 1998; Meinhof and Galasinski 2007). The economic pillars of modern, Occidental concepts of *liberal* citizenship were formulated in tandem with the Industrial Revolution, yet the globalization of the world's increasingly post-industrial economies has created tensions for the apparently necessary relationships between national citizenship, employment, and the nuclear family. As a result, migration, displacement, flexible notions of citizenship--including long distance nationalism--radical transformations in reproduction, demographic pressures, resource depletion, increased socio-economic inequities, and shifting political allegiances, have all interacted to dramatically change the face of current armed conflicts.

A globalized, digital modernity, marked by unprecedented and accelerated flows of people, things, capital, and ideas has led to incessant points of "glocalized" friction--both in the sense pondered by the classic theorist of war, the Prussian Karl von Clausewitz (2007), and intimated by contemporary anthropological commentator's, such as Anna Tsing (2004:6) and Carolyn Nordstrom (2007), to name but just two. In contrast to those military conflicts fought two decades ago, (such as the US Operation URGENT FURY--Grenada 1983, or the British military campaign with Argentina to recapture the Falkland Islands in 1982) which were characterized by relatively short periods for planning, not just for the military actions but for the post-conflict CMO as well, today's "small" wars can be measured not by months, but rather by decades. Temporal changes in the duration of post Cold war armed conflicts (many of which have roots preceding the fall of the Berlin Wall), have been matched by the global fluorescence of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and roadside bombings.

Notwithstanding these changes in the nature of contemporary warfare, U.S. Army Civil-Affairs (CA) units have been very instrumental in theaters of operation in Iraq and Afghanistan. Unfortunately, the CA missions of reconstruction and the oft repeated mantra of "winning the hearts and minds" of local inhabitants has led many supported maneuver unit commanders to believe that these are the only missions CA units are capable of conducting. This corresponds within a common misperception that CA units are ineffective in supporting the "bread and butter" mission of the maneuver commander--kinetic operations. If CA units are in fact to be used as force multipliers at the tactical and strategic levels, they must fulfill their traditional mission, while actively supporting combatant commanders fighting those forces hostile to Coalition Force interests, which have increasingly turned to IEDs as their weapon of choice. In the wake of the transformations of the nature of war, the Soldiers of one civil-affairs team believe they may have found an answer when it comes to addressing the threat of improvised explosive devices.

### **Weapons of the Weak, IEDs & the Achilles Heel**

Following the fall of Baghdad, Anti-Coalition Forces (ACF) quickly realized that the tactic of direct confrontation with the U.S. and its allies would result in military defeat. If the ACF wanted to engage the Coalition, but not annihilate itself in the process of doing so, it would have to adopt different stratagems beyond direct engagement. Early on in its armed struggle with the

occupying powers, the ACF began employing the conventional armaments of the guerilla: rockets, mines, mortars and, RPGs. At the outset of the Second World War, Margaret Mead asserted that, “warfare...is just an invention, older and more widespread than the jury system, but nonetheless an invention” (1940:404). The case of Iraq demonstrates this claim: ACF quickly morphed in their tactical approach to the awe inspiring technological might and fire-power of the Coalition Forces’ armature. To wit, they began a sustained and comparatively successful campaign of using remotely detonated improvised explosive devices (IEDs)<sup>xii</sup> to attack one of the U.S. military’s Achilles heels—its supply columns and support traffic.

Incendiary bombs (Molotov Cocktails), roadside bombings, sophisticated “Barrack Buster” mortar bombs, and remotely activated IEDs have been common place in the ensuing post-World War Two armed conflicts in regions across the globe, as varied as Vietnam, Northern Ireland, Algeria, Peru, Bosnia and Indonesia. Current IED’s usually comprise an explosive charge, a detonator, as well as an initiation system, which includes those components that initiate the charge responsible for detonating the IED. These include infra-red or magnetic triggers, remote control devices, and pressure sensitive trip wires.

The global proliferation of IEDs is matched by the diversity and ingenuity in their design and intended tactical use. Carrying a potentially large explosive payloads and the multiplied destructive impact of shrapnel and fuel as an incendiary weapon, Vehicle Borne IEDs (or VBIED) are typically used by “suicide bombers”, but these devices can also be remotely detonated. Those IEDs made for use against fortified targets often contain some type of armor piercing components, often a copper rod and shaft that is propelled by the explosive load. Similarly, antipersonnel IEDs usually contain shrapnel-producing items, like nails, wire, mechanical parts, metallic casings, or ball bearings. In Iraq, ACF have wired together multiple IEDs in a rosary-like chain, to disrupt, and in some instances, to effectively immobilize transport convoys.

In spite of the fact that the U.S. military is the most technologically advanced and professionally trained fighting force in the world, it simply has not been capable of effectively protecting its aforementioned logistics vulnerabilities. New physical force protection methods coupled with ad-hoc alterations to vehicles are, by themselves, proving insufficient in solving the ever present threat of IED attacks. Alternative approaches that rely on deep and nuanced understandings of the cultural dynamics of local populations are needed to engage the civilian population in efforts to reduce IED activity.

### **Civilian Dimensions to the IED Challenge**

Soon after the occupation of Iraq, Coalition Forces realized that there is no one method, technique or measure that will effectively address the multiple threats posed by the proliferation of IED attacks. Clearly, solutions to the threat of IEDs require a more holistic and integrated approach. Accordingly, adequate solutions to the multiple threats posed by IED must have various components including: physical force protection; changing tactics; better intelligence; and above all, a civilian population actively willing to assist with anti-IED measures. In Iraq, a

cooperative civilian population is certainly the most difficult aspect of implementing this holistic approach to effectively dealing with the challenges of IED attacks.

From the onset of the invasion of Iraq, Coalition Forces have long struggled to adequately engage the civilian populace, who by most accounts has been reluctant to provide information about the ACF in their local communities. Cultural repertoires differ across the globe. During civil protest or political disturbance, the behavior of peoples is not universal, but rather, “varies with the group and the culture” (2-8 *FM 3-19.15*, 2005). Clearly, cultural differences and linguistic barriers complicate obtaining relevant information from the Iraqi civilian populace regarding IED activity. Many of the Iraqi population perceive the US military and its allies as an occupying, “imperial force” incapable of restoring public order following the fall of Saddam’s regime. On this point, the US Armed Forces’ deficit in cultural and linguistic agility are surely the primary obstacles for obtaining credible and actionable information about the human terrain necessary to proactively respond to the threat of IEDs.

IED’s are, after all, often placed within the visual sight of non-combatants, yet the Iraqi civilian population seldom volunteers useful information to deter such attacks. Notwithstanding this Herculean “cultural” barrier, Civil-Affairs Team (CAT) A 25 of the 445<sup>th</sup> Civil-Affairs Battalion succeeded in acquiring substantive, useful information about IED activities from the local populace during its 2005 tour of duty in Iraq. This data provided invaluable in the development of a relatively successful anti-IED tactic, dubbed Operation Turkey Stomp.

### **Prologue: Anti-IED Operation Developed**

CAT A 25 arrived at Forward Operating Base (FOB) O’Ryan in late May of 2005. The team promptly set up shop relieving CAT A 5 of the 411<sup>th</sup> Civil-Affairs Battalion, and began usual CA missions--conducting a civil-military operations (CMO) assessment, interacting with the local government officials and community representatives, providing election support, and facilitating contracts for infrastructure reconstruction and public works efforts. The birth of the CA anti-IED campaign was born when Major Winton, the S3 from the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, approached the team and solicited CMO support to try and minimize the area’s IED activity. In response, the team “brainstormed” and developed an approach that would become the most effective non-lethal counter IED operation during OIF III.

At the outset, the CA operation was pitched to a subordinate unit of 1<sup>st</sup> BDE 3<sup>rd</sup> ID, the 1/128<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery (Wisconsin National Guard). While the unit was receptive, it was uninterested in conducting new activities due to its obligations with the upcoming Relief in Place (RIP) operation. In early October 2005 at the CMO inbrief, CAT A 25 discussed the concept with the incoming unit, 3/320<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery (101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade). The unit S-5, CPT Miesner, and the unit S-3, MAJ Hansbarger, liked the over all concept and arranged a follow-on brief later in the day with the unit commander LTC Inman. Likewise, LTC Inman agreed to the idea, and within a week the first iteration of Operation Turkey Stomp commenced.

### **Proactive Counter IED CMO: Operation Turkey Stomp**

Operation Turkey Stomp was designed as a non-lethal preventative counter-IED civil-military operation (CMO) for the reduction of IED attacks in rural geographical areas of Iraq. It vested responsibility for IED attacks in those associated with commerce, requiring active civilian engagement in efforts at minimizing insurgent actions in their immediate vicinity. In short, this operation targeted IED placements in rural population centers along convoy routes where Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) experienced serious attacks.

Given the strongly knit social networks of kin and kith among Iraqi's rural populace, many IED attackers are known to the community. Openly disclosing that a relative, neighbor, associate, or known "stranger" is responsible or involved in IED activity has profoundly high social costs for an informant, especially in light of the potential informant's individual responsibilities and obligations, which are deeply embedded in broader networks of collective affiliations, multiple social attachments (civic, ethnic, religious, occupational, class, regional, gender, etc.) and social antagonisms (secular, ethnic, religious, etc.).

By sanctioning those shop keepers located in close proximity to IED activity, Operation Turkey Stomp vested the civilian population with tangible interests in preventing ongoing attacks. The basic methods underpinning Operation Turkey Stomp are by no means a novel concept in the annals of armed conflict. Yet in Iraq, the technique outlined below has proven difficult, especially in light of the high risks for non-combatant collaboration, which far outweigh the benefits of "sitting on the side lines". Simply put, those (as well as their families and their associates) who collaborate with Coalition Forces are destined to live in a perpetual state of fear made real by the ongoing danger of violent retaliation.

Only small minorities of the Iraqi population firmly support either the Coalition or Anti-Coalition Forces. The overwhelming majority of Iraqi peoples fall somewhere in between, fatigued and traumatized by years of war that has brought ineffable suffering, wanton destruction, and a radicalized political climate that has failed to provide the institutional mechanisms for a peaceful, democratic transition to a civilian administered society (occupied or otherwise). The prototypical "middle-of-the-road" Iraqi civilian is concerned more with a return to "public order", personal security, and socio-economic stability, than they are about ideologically and economically driven agendas of the warring parties. The vast majority of the Iraqi civilian population simply does not want to get involved in the armed conflict, which by some accounts has devolved into a series of intractable civil wars involving sectarian violence, extralegal competition for resources, scrambles for power, and access to symbolic capital. In the fog of war, linguistic and cultural barriers have made it most challenging for Coalition Forces to determine who and what is "out of place." For instance, without a basic understanding of Arabic, not to mention local culture and social organization, it is very difficult say for a Coalition patrol in a Sunni neighborhood to differentiate between a group of Sunni youths heading home from work and a group of Shia youth with potentially more malevolent motives (or vice versa). Keeping in mind that the, "fundamental characteristic of human culture is its endless diversity" (Leach 1982:51), the Coalition Forces' lack of cultural and linguistic agility has hindered its comprehension of the fluid nature of the human terrain. This fault line has been widened by the structural constraints of mandated troop rotation, which undermines the ability of the US Armed Forces to effectively "develop a feel for the neighborhood" or AO necessary for successful CMO.

The complexities of Iraqi legal systems, forms of exchange, and cultural mechanisms underpinning notions of “property”, “rights” and “personhood” presents other significant challenges to Coalition Forces attempting to adjudicate in disputes over property in any given AO. Occidental, “Northern-Atlantic” systems of codified individual rights, surveys, land abstracts, deeds, property titles (and even street addresses) stipulating ownership and legal (customary or otherwise) claims to property are seemingly missing to the occupying forces in rural Iraq. While there is in fact an “officially” recognized property registration system in Iraq, there are significant popular disagreements about what is actually considered legitimate in terms of codified rights over property, commerce and other transactions. For instance, some Iraqis assert that any transactions conducted prior to the Saddam regime should be legally honored, while others think property rights affirmed during the Saddam regime should be honored. Some believe that anything occupied during and shortly after the invasion needs to be legally recognized. Further complicating the situation is the fact that most land offices based in the country’s cities have records reflecting conflicting claims to territory and rights to property, especially in rural sectors of the country. As a result, Coalition Forces often have a hard time understanding the dominant property and exchange systems (customary and legal/formal) in a given geographical area. Sure enough, Coalition Forces have had great difficulty in determining the ownership of particular properties, not to mention who “should” or “should not” be residing/working in a given geographic locale (which is predicated on collective memories of people, ‘things’ and ‘place’).

Taking into consideration the multiple obstacles outlined above (be they cultural, linguistic, a polarized populace, the lack of understanding of contested property systems, blindness to the collective memories of people, ‘things’ and ‘place’, etc.), the US Army embraced Operation Turkey Stomp as a dynamic response to the grievous threat of IED attacks. As a military operation, Operation Turkey Stomp first involved conducting an in-depth reconnaissance of the targeted area plagued by high rates of IED activity. The target area of CMO, usually a group of store complexes within two or three kilometers of each other, was then cordoned off. Individual shop owners were subsequently separated to minimize communication and collaborating in ways that potentially subverted the IED reduction objectives of Operation Turkey Stomp. Each merchant was then assigned a number that was painted on their respective shop(s). Photos were taken of individuals next to their identification number, and information was collected about them, including: their name; tribal sheik and village affiliation; what they sold; GPS grid coordinates of their store; the shop’s owner name (if rented); names of employees who appeared to be working at the store; notes on who was cooperative; and any “suspicious” or unusual behavior was recorded. Obviously, for many Iraqi locals who were involved in the Operation Turkey Stomp interview process, the knowledge that the Coalition has their photograph and personal information was (and ostensibly still is) greatly unsettling. Needless to say, after the initial filming and cataloguing of information collected during the first phase of Operation Turkey Stomp, there invariably was, as expected, a high turnover among shop workers. Individuals leaving employment after the initial phase of the operation were presumed by CF to be involved (actively or passively) with anti-Coalition activities.

An important aspect of Operation Turkey Stomp was the collection of detailed shop inventories. This was useful in helping to identify the source(s) of materials used for the production of IEDs.

Many IEDs are fabricated with parts obtained from conventional armaments (including explosive components of military equipment such as--ejection seats, explosive bolts, etc.) and standard consumer items from electronics goods, such as cellular telephones, pagers, electronic garage door openers, or timers scavenged from electric ovens, washing machines or the like. In one region with a high rate of IED attacks, four of the twenty shops had materials necessary for making IEDs. After initial inventories were conducted, those shops with IED materials were raided to temporarily seize materials suspected in the manufacture of IEDs, and to further question the vendor of the suspicious, confiscated materials. The inventory included photographing commercial goods, wares and material items in the shops, which may be of future import to CMO, particularly for explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) personnel to ascertain if materials in specific shops (or individuals) are or were related to components used in the production of IEDs in a circumscribed area of operation. Apropos, when photographs of narrow gauge copper wire from a local shop were shown to an EOD technician, he quickly surmised this was the likely source of an outbreak of IEDs that used thin copper wire--an anomaly in this AO. This provides us with a good illustration of the need for culturally agile CA units that are capable of detecting 'things', people, or 'ideas' "out of place"--e.g. one needs to possess a deep and "thick" understanding of local, "indigenous" life-ways and worldviews.

All of the information collected during Operation Turkey Stomp was subsequently combined into what has been dubbed a "read book", which is comprised of detailed information about centers of commerce: employees, shop inventories, shop owners, etc. The "read book" was then provided to patrols and units that were passing through a given surveyed area. Here it is worthy of mention that a "read book" did far more than simply connect geographical areas of responsibility to individuals, it enabled CF patrols to know exactly who to talk to during their missions in AOs. Not without its pitfalls and glaring gaps, the "read book" provides a skeletal understanding of key facets of the local human terrain, and helps to manage the ever uncertainty about who (and what) is and who (and what) is not "out of place" by connecting faces, names, things, and locations. The raw data collected from the preparatory phase of Operation Turkey Stomp revealed several interesting and unexpected findings about the human terrain of those regions with high rates of IED attacks. For instance, Sudanese immigrants in one area were often found working in the highest IED placement locations. Similarly, the CA operation found that Sunni communities living within larger Shia communities also had significantly more IED activity.

While providing critical local knowledge about the theater of operation, the so-called "read book" can serve as an indispensable tool for maintaining mission continuity when units transition in or out of the AO. By no means an ethnography, the "read book" does, however, serve as a repository for crucial information gathered by the previous unit, compiled into a standardized and easy-to-use format amenable to social network analysis, demography, and other forms of categorizing people and things (immovable and otherwise) necessary for post conflict operations, especially in terms of the process of reconciliation.. The "read book" was used to sustain the effort when the 3/320th FA moved out of the AOR and the 3/29 FA moved in. Store owners were quickly aware that the SOP continued on when patrols stopped at each location with the "read book" in hand, and started asking to interview people by name.

### **The "Read Book" and Engaging the Civil Populace in Anti-IED Measures**

After a coalition unit collected information, photographed locales, and conducted primary inventories, all local shop owners/managers were obliged to read the following prepared statement:

*You need to paint the number I have given you on your store by tomorrow. If it is not painted on your store by tomorrow I will be back to deal with you individually. I want you to look down the road to your left and to the right. As far as you can see. If a road side bomb goes off during daylight hours in line of sight of your store, we will shut your store down and you will have to come to the CMIC [Civil Military Information Center] on Saturdays to be screened. You are not allowed to reopen your store until you have come to the CMIC. If you reopen your store without our permission, the Iraqi Army will come to your store and take control of your stock and/or you will be detained.*

From the Coalition Force's perspective, this written declaration made two important points to those associated with commercial activities in areas with confirmed IED activity. First, it unequivocally indicated to merchants and their employees that they would bear direct consequences for the placement of IEDs in the vicinity of their shops. Secondly, it made clear that if there was an IED attack, their place of business would be closed until the store owner came to a Coalition base and personally spoke to Coalition Forces Counter Intelligence personnel (Army CI or Air Force OSI) to gain permission to reopen commercial activities. Facing the immanent closure of the very means of their livelihood, an IED blast in the (visual) vicinity of their shops took on significantly greater consequence for local inhabitants than an IED incident had in the past. Given the centrality of shops to the daily life of rural Iraqi communities, their closure has profound social costs and economic burdens. IED attacks now had the impact of wounding CF, combatants and civilians, but the local economy as well. Operation Turkey Stomp coupled shop owners and their community's socio-economic interests with the Coalition's desire to minimize IED attacks.

Operation Turkey Stomp's post-IED attack interviews facilitated civilian cooperation with Coalition Forces. It obliged all shop keepers in the vicinity of an IED attack to meet personally with the Coalition in a confidential setting. Requiring all shop owners to meet individually with Coalition Forces functioned to reduce the shopkeeper's risk of being singled out by Anti-Coalition Forces as a collaborator, and gave an opportunity for pro-Coalition or the so called "middle-of-the-road" portion of the population to relay relevant information in a discrete and confidential fashion. Post-IED attack interviews also helped determine which individuals were being candid, since responses were cross checked with other interviewee responses. Debriefing individuals in private also provided Coalition Force intelligence assets with a strategic opportunity to cover subjects they normally would not be able to in other venues. For example, during one post IED attack debriefing, the shopkeeper revealed the locations of several weapon caches, and the dumping site for several corpses of slain Iraqi policemen. Similarly, these post-IED attack debriefing interviews provide crucial information for EOD personnel tasked with rendering safe and disposing of IEDs in all of their permutations and shifting locales.

### **Case Study-AO Tampa**



The first iteration of operation Turkey Stomp began on October 28, 2005. CAT A 25 chose AO Tampa since the area had heavy IED activity, and was located on a major Coalition supply route. AO Tampa proved an ideal location for implementing this CMO. The region in question had nineteen clusters of shops situated in two areas along a relatively straight stretch (17 km) of four lane roadway, with the added advantage that almost every commercial cluster was located within eyesight of the next group of shops. During a two-day period, the CA team and elements from the 3/320<sup>th</sup> FA (Field Artillery) cordoned off store groups, conducted preliminary interviews, and conducted detailed inventories of the merchant's wares.

Following its implementation, Operation Turkey Stomp immediately began to bear fruit. In the ninety day period directly following the first operation, there were no IED events in AO Tampa, compared to almost daily IED attacks, which had previously been the norm in the region. The civil-affairs team returned to the area roughly three weeks after the start of Operation Turkey Stomp and discovered upon updating their "read books" that six individuals working in the area had precipitously departed. Although never proven, Counter Intelligence had suspected all six of Anti-Coalition sympathies. In AO Tampa daylight attacks fell by 90% and night attacks fell by 70%. As predicted, many of the remaining attacks were concentrated at the far ends of AO Tampa, outside the shopkeepers' visual line of sight.



**Shop Complexes A through E, in AO Tampa**

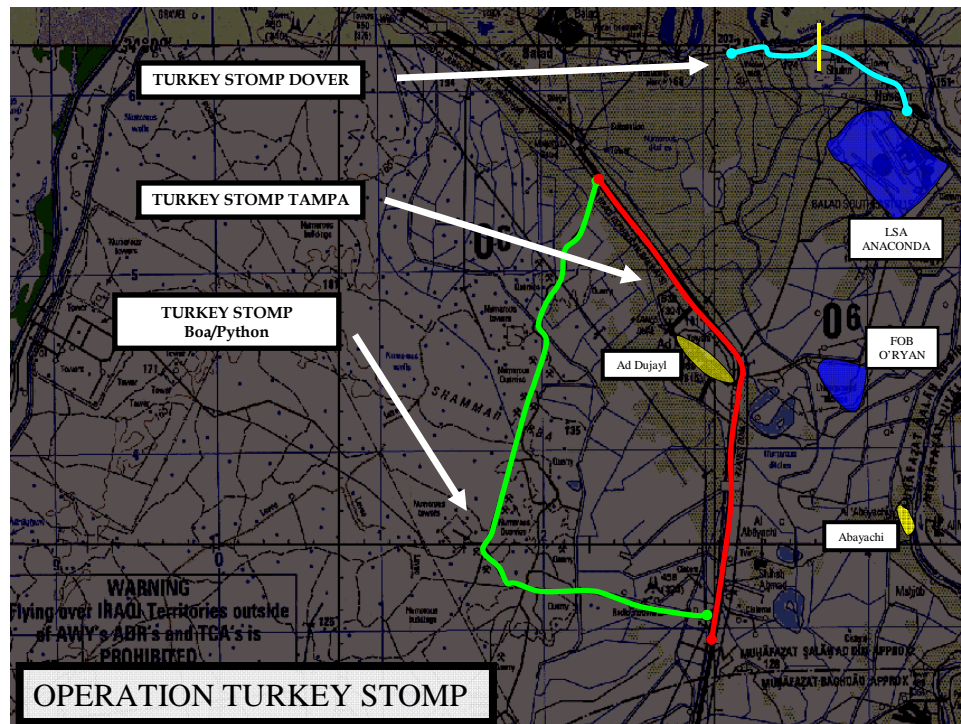
In many ways the first iteration of the Operation Turkey Stomp was the most successful demonstration of this CA tactic. In the first operation, the location of most store groupings were within eyesight of each other, which is atypical in many rural AOs. This in turn contributed to a relatively “safe” stretch of road throughout the length of AO Tampa’s primary transit route. The other iterations of Operation Turkey Stomp decreased IED events within sight of the store complexes, but the operation concentrated IED attacks in the “gaps” located in between the store groups. Although large stretches of relatively “safe” roads were the exception, and not the rule for the various iterations of Operation Turkey Stomp, this CA tactic, nevertheless, stands as a proven example of how a non-lethal, preventative counter-IED CMO can help shape the battle space.

### **The Measurements of Success: Operation Turkey Stomp in Retrospect**

After Operation Turkey Stomp began, IED activity in the immediate vicinity of the local stores stopped or was reduced significantly in the AO. IED activity in the broader area--beyond the visual field of shops either stopped, or in some instances increased. In locations where there was a long chain or string of shops within eyesight, IED attacks occurred at the distant ends of the chain. Nevertheless, IEDs continued to be detonated in the spaces between shops that were not within view of shops.

Here one should ask: what is the advantage of stopping IEDs in one place, if those who resort to their use just move them a couple of hundred meters down the road? In simple terms, the military benefits lie in this tactics’ capacity to shape the human terrain by canalizing IED attacks into more manageable areas by closing segments of the battle space to forces hostile to US Armed Forces, Coalition partners, and civilian noncombatants. As with any military alliance, the Coalition Forces have a finite amount of resources; Operation Turkey Stomp helped focus assets (patrols, snipers, surveillance, air support) on rural locations with high IED activity. As a result, Operation Turkey Stomp stopped most IED attacks in the immediate vicinity of shops--and sometimes in the “vulnerable gaps”, now located between Iraqi points of local commerce.

In military terms, measuring the quantitative and qualitative successes (or failures) of Operation Turkey Stomp is difficult at best. There is simply no way of ascertaining the number of prevented IED events or aborted attacks one can attribute to this CMO. As such, the “deterrent” value of this civil-military operation must be observed in more impressionistic (though tangible) terms. Perhaps the most reliable measure of the operation’s efficacy is through comparing the number of IED attacks before and after conducting Operation Turkey Stomp.



In the three iterations where CAT A 25 used Operation Turkey Stomp in built up rural areas, attacks on Coalition Forces dropped by 60-70%. Day-time IED attacks dropped by about 90%, while night-time IED attacks dropped by roughly 60%.

## Evaluating Efficacy: Military & Anthropological Optics

There are, as mentioned, a number of ways for determining the success of Operation Turkey Stomp. The ability to shape the field of battle by canalizing IED attacks, while also reducing the frequency of IED activity is a tangible benefit--in spite of the inevitable unintended consequences the operation created (e.g., increased IED attacks in other areas of the battlefield, promotion of illicit economic activity, ethical implications, etc.). For a Soldier, the advantage of Operation Turkey Stomp is that it brings individuals<sup>xiii</sup> that potentially have some information about an IED attack into a controlled environment where they can be placed in the classical “prisoners dilemma.”<sup>xiv</sup>

Individuals being interviewed know that their neighbors are being questioned. They have no way of determining what their neighbors said, or will say, and know that if they do not cooperate with the Coalition Forces, their shops will remain closed. An individual with potentially valuable information regarding IED activity must then make a choice between cooperating (“defecting” in the prisoner dilemma model) with the Coalition, or remaining quiet (“cooperating” in the prisoner dilemma model). The advantages of cooperating with the Coalition are compounded when monetary rewards are offered for relevant information. In sum, from a utilitarian, ego-centered perspective, this operation allows individuals who want to cooperate with an opportunity to do so anonymously. When relevant information about IED activities is obtained, this serves as leveraging cooperation from others, especially in light of the

material benefits (or costs) in question. Non-lethal CMO approaches to anti-IED measures should be considered in the formulation of the TEP (Theater Engagement Plan), which serves as the explicit guidelines for the Military commands strategy to achieve both US short term security goals in AOs, as well as a vision or blue-print for the USG long term objectives for regional peace, reconciliation, socio-economic development, and overall prosperity. CMO activities, such as Operation Turkey Stomp, contribute to the continued development of Render Safe Procedures (RSP) designed to prevent unacceptable detonations of unexploded ordnance, including IEDs.

For a social anthropologist, the Operation Turkey Stomp's efficacy can be determined through another optic, one tempered by sensitivity to individual motivations, themselves imbricated by the demands of biology as well as the complex interaction with "enculturation"--or learned, socialized behavior. Having said that--one must also recall, as Marcel Mauss noted long ago (1938), that personhood is itself a culturally constructed category that includes collective interests stemming from the individual's multiple social attachments. As previously mentioned, the first iteration of Operation Turkey Stomp was the most successful example of this tactic, leading one to ask how effective such an approach will be over the long run given humanity's propensity to adapt overtime to direct and indirect violence. As a tactic, Operation Turkey Stomp's modicum of success in the reduction of IED activity invariably is a function of the rural, sparsely populated AO. Hence, this calls into question the tactical limitations of this CMO in densely populated urban areas plagued by civil strife, political violence, and warfare.

The transformation in armed conflict, and hence the nature of civil-military operations is manifest in recent United Nation's declarations aimed at shaping the human terrain, particularly in so-called post-conflict regions: the Balkans, Northern Ireland, Rwanda, etc. Representing the input of more than 200 individuals with experience working with local, regional or international rule of law institutions in post-conflict zones, UN guidelines as expressed in the *Partnership Program on Peace-building and Rule of Law* emerged following several meetings that were held between March 2002 and May 2003. The UN's guidelines pay explicit attention to the multicultural dimensions of CMO. In this respect, the UN guidelines assert that, "International personnel must be sensitive to local culture...be subject to continual review...reach out to the local citizenry, and be very conscious never to patronize them."

In addition to ethical considerations, to wit, targeting a collective group for reprisal, and hence potentially ostracizing or scapegoating merchants; forced closure of civilian means of livelihood; interrogation of non-combatants, Operation Turkey Stomp is a tactic that has limited long-term appeal. While the non-lethal tactic did minimize the frequency of IED incidents, it does little in the way of understanding the cultural logic under-pinning IED activity in the first place (which is obviously necessary for preemptive and post-detonation actions). In terms of "winning the hearts and minds" of the local civilian populace, the tactics' heavy-handed measures did little for engendering local goodwill--and surely provided symbolic fodder for those hostile to the Coalition Forces. Given the *longue durée* perspective of the anthropological gaze, which gives precedent to long term historical structure rather than simply the immediacy of lived events, Operation Turkey Stomp's greatest limitation is its overwhelming reliance on sensitivity to "local culture"--a capability sadly missing from the impressive range of assets at the US Armed Forces' disposal. Failure to recognize the human dimensions of this tactic (rather than say the military or operational aspects) leads to underestimating the unintended socio-political

consequences of Operation Turkey Stomp's socially aggressive approach to dealing with merchants (interviews/interrogations) and the use of painted numbers--which provided the image of a belligerent force embracing methods that runs painfully close to the dehumanizing techniques employed by the Nazi's ghastly practice of visually enumerating civilian populations.

Cultural agility, as noted previously, has not been a strong suit for current CMO in Iraq. As articulated in the recent, and somewhat polemical US Army and Marines counter-insurgency manual, what makes CMO actions like Operation Turkey Stomp so difficult, "is the amount of sociocultural information that must be gathered and understood" (*FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5*, 3-35 2006). While there are no quick or simple "fixes" to this profound lacunae in the cultural and linguistic information gathering and analytic capacity of the US Armed Forces, and hence its ability to respond adequately to the terror and violence of the IED threat (real or perceived), Operation Turkey Stomp, nonetheless, represents a non-lethal approach to proactively facing the lethal armature of the "weapons of the weak."

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan evoke the terms of engagement noted in many armed conflicts currently raging across the globe. Operation Turkey Stomp, albeit with its many limitations, does provide a useful case study of the role CA units can play in shaping the human terrain, and hence the terms of war, peace, justice and reconciliation. Demonstrating by the archaeological and ethnographic record of the "long primal march" of humanity, wars appear to be a phenomenon that will far out live us. Yet the ethical and practical questions (in a military, political and socio-economic sense) surrounding the actual terms and consequences of armed engagement, and what constitutes *legitimate force* have undergone dramatic changes--on the battlefield, in the halls of national policy makers, among international bodies charged with military oversight (such as the UN and the ITC), in scholarly debates, and in public understandings. While few anthropologists have directly addressed the Gordian knot of anti-IED measures, some have of late turned to engaging with military doctrine. Wax and Moos urge greater academic-military collaboration in understanding what they deem *asymmetric warfare* (2006:13). Whatever one does think about the evolving nature of warfare (and thus the term *asymmetric warfare*), Wax and Moos seem to be justified when they chide those who *selectively* choose when the US should intervene militarily across the globe.<sup>xv</sup>

Some anthropological commentators, such as Robert Gonzalez have rightly critiqued the recently drafted US Army's counter-insurgency manual (*FM-324*) for failing to address whether or not military occupation is a proper course of action, or for that matter whether or not the "insurgent's" grievances are legitimate. Yet Gonzalez is somewhat disingenuous by not underscoring the obvious fact that the manual's target audience is the Soldier, not the politicians (or public they represent) that send Soldiers off to war. On this point, Gonzalez writes, "[b]ecause it (FM 3-24) ignores the broader context of US imperial power, it is incomplete, inadequate, and at times inane" (2007:17). While these charges may be naïve, overly reductive and seemingly 'reactive' in their sweeping generalizations regarding the imperial force of a putative *Pax Americana*, they should, nevertheless, be candidly addressed in the academic (or public) arena by Soldiers, policy makers, and qualified scholars of the nature of war and peace.

This frank, inclusive and academically rigorous debate provides one of the most useful mechanisms for influencing policy makers' decisions, and more importantly their constituencies,



regarding those existentially charged issues--life and death, oppression and justice, victory and defeat--surrounding armed conflict (Moos and Dean 2007).

In writing about the Peloponnesian Wars, Thucydides remarked that numerous unfounded ideas about the foe abounded. In this sense, Thucydides' assertion rings true today: "So little pains do the vulgar take in the investigation of truth, accepting readily the first story that comes to hand" (1.20.3). For those of us who deplore the militarization of society, we remain resolutely committed to the principal that debates over the ethical nature of military intervention and the *legitimate use of force* should be determined by civil sectors of US society--not by the Armed Forces, who after all are professionally trained to execute military orders that stem from policies approved by officials ostensibly elected through the central imaginary of contemporary politics, namely the process (albeit imperfect) of representative "democracy." And it is here that we part company with those who argue for scholarly disengagement with the US military. From an operational and tactical level, cultural agility is an essential component in any CMO.

Anthropologically speaking, those in the US who argue for a "purist" discipline reflect not only a peculiarly "American" innocence regarding the conflictual nature of the world, but more importantly, a methodological "straight jacket" which pre-empts the understanding of power in its various manifestations in the actual, lived world, which unfortunately does not fit cozily with the binary ethics--good/evil--regnant in the US academy, not to mention popular media coverage on the ethics of anthropological engagement with the military (Canon 2007).

Some have voiced that participation in a misguided policy in order to mitigate its ill effects is a slippery slope, especially for those who have a choice not to participate in direct combat. That said, we must also question the price of not participating in what some have deemed bad policy. Total disengagement fits well with the general ethos of the discipline of socio-cultural anthropology, yet does it suit the challenges emanating for the increasingly militarized world? Without going beyond the academic "Green Zone" (or Ivory Tower if you like), we run the risk of fomenting an intellectual climate dominated by a bunker mentality that precludes the possibility of generating any sense of humanity in dreadful situations. An anthropological mandate to comprehend the variations in the human experience (Meirs, Dean and Erikson 2007) is negated when we prohibit collaboration with the military.

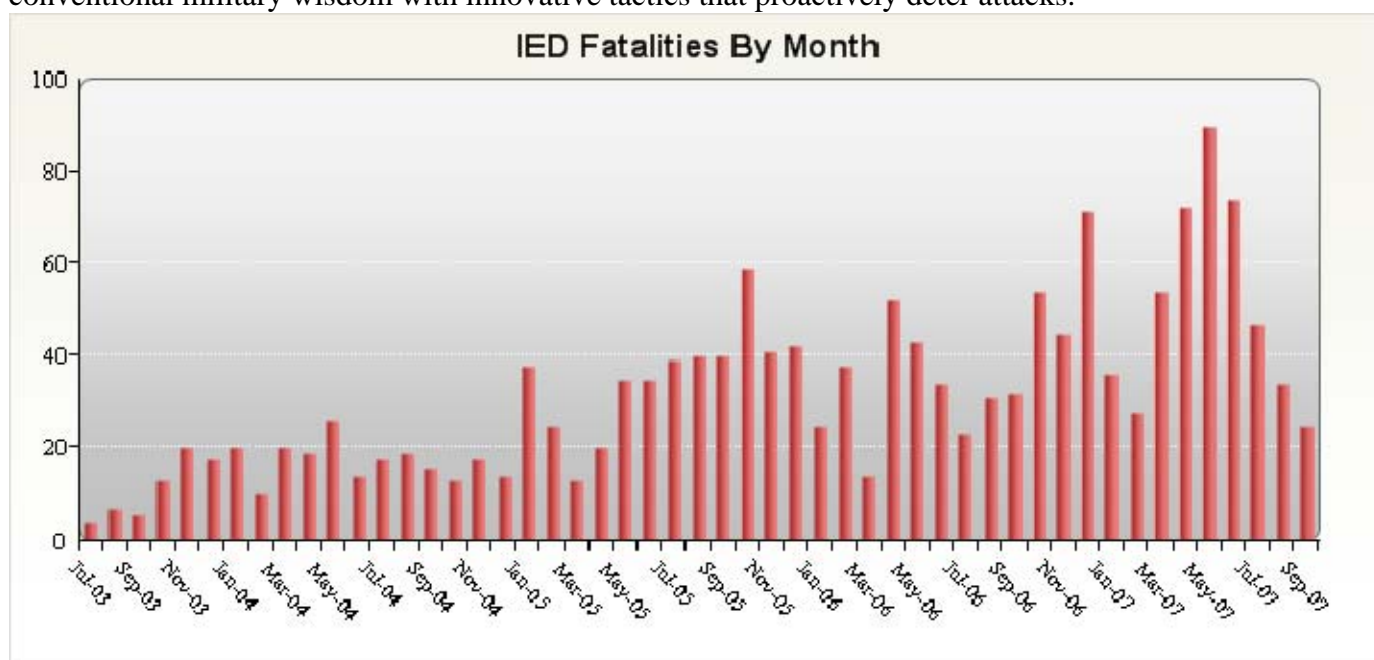
Defying the *gray zones* of social life, a Manichaeian view is innocent, fits well with binary assessments of complex realities, and as such is woefully inadequate for grounding our discipline in what Carrithers (2005) has aptly called a "moral science of possibilities." As the anthropologist travels between overlapping and at times discontinuous ethical worlds, a "moral science of possibilities" takes root. Transgressing a single moral world leads to *zerreissen*--a torn or fragmented- postmodern world where one soon realizes that "things" could always be otherwise.<sup>xvi</sup>

## **Conclusion: the Changing Face of Civilian Engagement**

Operation Turkey Stomp was a simple and somewhat effective way of temporarily deterring IED activity in a given area. The "pro-active" component assembled information about the civilian population and posed financial sanctions (shop closings) if IED's occurred within eyesight of a

given shop group or cluster. These actions allowed the Coalition to unify civilian Iraqi interests with the objectives of the Coalition Forces. The “reactive”, punitive component of the operation consisted of closing down shops in close vicinity of IED attacks, and obliging formal interviews of all merchants who wanted their shops reopened. In this sense, no one individual was publicly singled out as a collaborator with Coalition Forces, and intelligence personnel were provided with an opportunity to gather and verify actionable information for the CMO.

Technological countermeasures, including remote jamming systems, are by themselves ineffectual in dealing with the destructive challenges of IEDs. Judging by Iraqi’s continued and upward curve of IED related Coalition fatalities (see below), creative solutions must combine conventional military wisdom with innovative tactics that proactively deter attacks.



Source: iCausalties.org (Iraqi Coalition Causality Count)  
<http://icasualties.org/oif/IED.aspx>, accessed Sept 22, 2007<sup>xvii</sup>

CA tactics, like Operation Turkey Stomp, highlight the requisite role of extensive field-experience, training, and above all, cultural agility needed to address the proliferation of IEDs. Technical information, such as patterns of brisance, or the shattering effect of IEDs (which depends upon the velocity of detonation), details about the incident (including interviews), and the inventories of the “social life” of the things and physical targets attacked should all be used in concert to comprehend the structural conditions triggering IED activity. Operation Turkey Stomp provided visual cues, actionable information, and a short-term tactic for reducing IED activity in a given AO. Operation Turkey Stomp illustrates the need to enhance the Armed Forces capacity to recognize telltale signs of IED activity (pre- and post-detonation), which is unquestionably the most valuable asset in the increasingly sophisticated repertoire of IED detection equipment and techniques now circulating throughout the world.

Perhaps, the most important impact of Operation Turkey Stomp is that it provided the civilian population with strong, tangible incentives to resist the use of IEDs by anti-Coalition Forces.



Sadly, military commanders often view the local civilian populace as an obstacle to peace in the protracted wars now raging in Iraq and Afghanistan. We contend that non-lethal CMO actions, such as Operation Turkey Stomp, can encourage civilian cooperation by providing relevant information about IED activity, and thereby promote Coalition objectives.<sup>xviii</sup> Writing in his magnum opus *Oriental Despotism*, Karl Wittfogel asserted 50 years ago that “total terror” robs a people's will for autonomy because it deprives them of the “desire for independent political action” (1957:137). The terror posed by the age old, yet digitally morphed, bomb--the IED--with it's simple yet horrific capacity to unleash catastrophic military, political, and personal violence and trauma is a seductively enigmatic weapon. Adequate responses to the multifaceted dimensions to the threat of IEDs in any given AO dictate equally imaginative approaches grounded in an appreciation of the dynamic character of the human component in civil-military operations.

Since at least the nineteenth century, many modern military manuals have adhered to customary principles of military necessity, humanity and chivalry, as recently argued by Sir Adam Roberts (2007). While all these codified doctrines have implications for targeting, so too does the preamble of the 1868 St. Petersburg Declaration on explosive bullets:

*Considering that the progress of civilization should have the effect of alleviating as much as possible the calamities of war; That the only legitimate object which States should endeavor to accomplish during war is to weaken the enemy...* (Cited by Rogers 2007).

In light of the transformed character of war, and the enduring and highly complex nature of the occupation of Iraq, is this foundational, “principle guiding the conduct of armed conflict now out of date” Rogers (2007)? Given the lack of clarity regarding the extent to which international law applies in occupied territories, not to mention the ability of the UN Security Council (or other multilateral agencies) to adequately implement international law, raises perplexing questions worthy of careful analysis for those concerned with the rules relating to armed engagement, particularly the Laws of War and International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

While remaining savvy to the shifting tides in international jurisprudence and its impact on the ethical, or “humane” nature of warfare, a successful CMO should follow simple cues from contemporary (*Military Review* 2006) classical counterinsurgency<sup>xix</sup> and insurgency doctrines and techniques in order strive to minimize the use of lethal force, and ultimately actively engage in non-kinetic operations (e.g., diplomacy, civil affairs, reconstruction of infrastructure, humanitarian assistance, education and public health works, etc.). As such, these CA efforts will serve to amplify support for the occupying force and to undercut public acceptance for those opposed to it. Cultural agility will mitigate operational and tactical mistakes that invariably are made in any armed conflict. As we have illustrated, CA units do have a pivotal role in developing courses of action that reduce the use of fire power and increase the effectiveness of non-lethal actions, such as Operation Turkey Stomp, which was intentionally formulated to save civilian and combatant lives.

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## **Fitting Into the Fight - An Engineer's Dream From a Brigade Troops Battalion S3**

**Alexander Fullerton and Garth Myers**

### **Introduction**

The provision of infrastructure and services for Sewer, Water, Electricity and Trash (or SWET in its military acronym form) is boring to most people, or, more charitably, SWET belongs to a category of things people don't like to think about. In much of the urban United States for at least the last fifty years or more, most of the time, indeed, people don't have to think of these things. Most residents of US cities flush their toilets, turn on their taps, switch on their lights, computers, televisions, or microwaves, or take out their garbage without a thought. The trash might require some thought: is trash day on a Monday, or a Wednesday, maybe we should recycle, can I take the hazardous stuff to the special collection spot on Saturday or not. There are certainly professionals in all of these spheres who think about them all the time, because their companies or government offices are all about sewage, water supply, electricity, or solid waste

management – there are a lot of people who work for a living in these realms. But for most American urbanites and suburbanites – even most rural dwellers - SWET just happens.

But there are a lot of places in the world where SWET doesn't happen at all. Urban geographers have often thought of cities like organisms, or spoken of the urban metabolism, the circuits and networks of a city's body. In the US, or in the Western world in general, SWET provision works like the respiratory system, it is like breathing, in, out – this was the first time all day, as you read this, that you thought about breathing. But in many other places, when SWET does not happen (in other words when infrastructure and services are lacking for SWET), cities and the people in them must somehow find ways and means to get by. There is no getting by without water, but millions of people throughout the world go without the other components, or subsist with makeshift or even illegal service provision for them.

When cities become used to not having SWET services and infrastructure, there can be great despair, but often surprising innovation. When cities become used to having SWET, and then suddenly, often dramatically, they lose their SWET, in many cases all hell breaks loose. The 1977 blackout in New York City, garbage strikes in Philadelphia, or of course the traumatic losses of all services in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina are all places and times that witness the havoc that can ensue from an absence of SWET in cities that are used to having it. This is in some ways the case for much of urban Iraq.

Major Alexander Fullerton details below the daunting tasks and vigorous enthusiasms of one operations officer in an engineering battalion SWET mission in eastern Baghdad in 2005. His experiences, the highs and lows, speak for themselves. In our interactions, however, the themes that I have drawn out are those that connect with my own research in solid waste management and urban environmental planning in eastern Africa. I am humbled by the contemplation of Major Fullerton and his brigade doing the ordinary in the midst of extraordinary circumstances. Providing infrastructure or services can be highly technical. We need engineers to design sewage systems, water systems, electricity grids, and solid waste facilities, if they are to be done properly, safely, efficiently, and in the interests of environmental sustainability. I am old enough and I have seen the world enough to know there are few truly universal wants, needs, or beliefs in human experiences, but the need for water supply is one of these. Nearly everyone on earth would, in theory, want to have a safe, clean and efficient water supply in or near their dwelling.

Although millennia of human existence prove we can exist as a species without sewage, electricity or trash services, these components must come in a list of matters that a clear majority of humans would like to have these days, especially those living in cities. Some of Major Fullerton's story is familiar to me in the technical or practical engineering and urban environmental planning dimensions. There are cases of spaghetti pipes for illegal water supplies, or we might say linguini wires for illegal power set-ups, common in Baghdad as in much of eastern Africa.

The other familiar refrain is one that ought to be far more central to the consciousness of the American public than it is, particularly in relation to the war in Iraq. This is that basic infrastructure and good governance, indeed political legitimacy, go together. Major Fullerton and his brigade came to see that their technical plans required many non-technical things for

implementation. Among these, we discussed a detailed understanding of property law and land control, the differences between governance structures on paper and in reality, and the legitimacy of specific operations and of local allies. Sometimes, seemingly totally illogical chains of events took place, typical of the irregular warfare of counter-insurgency settings. This required Major Fullerton, in a sense, to get inside the illogic, such as the meaning of illegal kickbacks in local government, the shifting agendas of the Sadr Army, the complexity and diversity block-by-block of Iraqi Islam. This sort of nuanced cultural and political awareness and nimble thinking is the only way to get people to buy into ownership of the SWET projects, meaning ownership here in a social sense. As Colonel Neate remarked in the Roundtable, the “center of gravity is the consent of the people.” Achieving and maintaining that consent comes with rapport, which only happens from understanding people, Colonel Neate might say. It is our claim that Sewer, Water, Electricity, and Trash provision is the forgotten respiratory system of the body of rapport. – *Dr. Garth Myers*

### An Engineer’s Dream

28 Jan 2005. I stepped off the plane into the fine Baghdad dust. I was the Operations Officer of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, Brigade Troops Battalion (BTB), notably one of the first Brigade Troops Battalions to be deployed in combat under the new Transformation model. Civil and Environmental Engineer by schooling and Combat Engineer by military trade, I was wondering what the year in Iraq would entail for my engineering background. Our mission as the Brigade Troops Battalion was to support the Brigade with the assorted Signal, Military Intelligence, Military Police, Chemical, and Infantry Soldiers to ensure their success.

Although we had remnants of Engineers left in the Battalion from the transformation of the Engineer Battalion, I thought that I would not be using any of my engineering background or skills for our upcoming mission. This view quickly changed as the dust settled at my feet and my mission for the year began to take shape.



The “SWET TEAM” and interpreters as we start our mission in Baghdad



Electrical networks prior to US involvement

Falling in on our Brigade operational area of Eastern Baghdad, I linked up with the 20<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion out of Fort Hood, Texas. Since they had not transformed to the new Brigade Combat team, the 20<sup>th</sup> Engineers had a large staff dedicated to the mission of rebuilding the Iraqi infrastructure in Eastern Baghdad. This mission concentrated on providing the essential services of Sewer, Water, Electricity, Trash, and other miscellaneous projects

to the residents of Sadr City and 9-Nissan on the eastern half of Baghdad. Without an Engineer Battalion in his Brigade, the Commander re-assessed his assets and directed the Brigade Troops Battalion with Engineers filling the roles of the Battalion Commander, Battalion Executive Officer and Battalion Operations Officer to receive this mission. We in the BTB realized that we would become a major combat multiplier, as our engineering backgrounds would play a major role in the overall success of the Brigade's mission in Iraq and the rebuilding of the Iraqi Infrastructure. But the big question was how to make it happen.

With the small Operations staff that was directed by the BTB Mission Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) (I was only authorized one other officer in the entire section covering the S3/S2 and S6), I was about to take over the same mission that the 20<sup>th</sup> Engineers executed with over seven Engineer Officers. Luckily, many of the residual officers from our transition from the 10<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion to the Brigade Troops Battalion were still on staff. I quickly asked the Battalion Commander for every officer that he could spare to help in this mission. By combining these officers with the Assistant Brigade Engineer, we were able to build a SWET shop of five officers to handle the 800 million dollar reconstruction mission. These officers, not all Engineers by trade, with careful guidance would soon learn the ins and outs of engineering management. Our mission quickly became an Engineer's dream and it seems that I was going to be deep into the decisive operations of the Brigade.



As the Officer in Charge of the Reconstruction Projects on the Eastern Side of Baghdad, I was responsible for essential service projects in our Area of Operations. These covered improvements to the Sewer, Water, Electricity, and Trash services and also a large number of miscellaneous services (police stations, fire stations, hospitals, schools, and the like). Projects ranged from the large scale of over \$120 Million (rebuilding the Sadr City electrical network) to smaller scale of less than \$10,000. We concentrated on giving Iraqis the simple things in life that Americans take for granted such as running water, electricity in their homes, a way to get trash out of the streets, and some type of sewage system that takes raw sewage away from their residential areas. Yes, many neighborhoods currently have no sewage system, electricity, or running water. Yet children still rush to the streets when we drive past, waving with huge smiles as they know our mission and understand what we are trying to bring for their future.

Another interesting part of this job was the dealings with the local Iraqi government agencies. It was rewarding to see young Soldiers morph into political advisors ensuring that locals remain an integral part of the prioritized and selection process. Determining how to continuously develop the local economy is a major factor while projects are in the basic idea stage. These projects also have to meet at least the minimal professional standard of engineering, which is almost unheard of in many developing countries. The development of the projects comes through many different channels into the cell. It can be done through meetings with the local District Advisory Councils (DACs) or Neighborhood Advisory Councils (NACs), local patrols talking to the residents,



Technical Advisory Teams (TAT) conducting Area Assessments, or the City Amanat (like City Hall). From here the idea is filtered into the City municipality (depending on the type of project) and their staff starts designing the details of a project. This shows the strong working relationship of both the Iraqi government and the coalition forces as we work hand in hand creating and executing these projects for the Iraqi people. From here, most are checked and approved by the Iraqi Engineers in the Amanat. Many times we found that the Amanat already had a project on their shelf similar to the one we were trying to execute that needed only slight modifications. From this, a Statement of Work was developed along with an Amanat approved bill of quantities and an independent estimate of cost. This is probably the most critical part of the entire process, dealing with contractors who do not have professional building codes. If you are not specific and tell them exactly what you expect for quality of materials in a project, issues will quickly arise during the execution. It reminds me of the old college task of writing directions on paper on how to make a peanut butter sandwich and then having someone figure out all of the ways the written words can be interpreted. Time spent on the Statement of Work (SOW) is probably the most important and worthwhile part of the entire project. Once the SOWs were finalized we advertised them in the local economy. This was accomplished in two different ways, either by contacting local contractors who have completed other projects for the coalition forces and have proven themselves, or by publishing the request for bids on the local Iraqi business center web page. By publishing the SOW on the local business center web page we received a wide variety of independent bids for the project. These bids go through an Award selection process weighing past performance, bid price, professionalism, and so forth. This is actually an eye opening experience as many bids come in at ridiculous prices. An example: a project to run, operate, secure and maintain five sewage lift stations for seven months came back with an independent government estimate of \$30,000. When we placed the bid out on the web site for independent bids, we received submissions that ranged from \$2,000 all the way to \$1 million. The tendency would be to go for the lowest bid. However, our engineering sense — i.e., that the bidder was incapable of executing the statement of work for that amount of money — allowed us to filter out useless bids. These are the things that you are not taught in the military or civilian schools and can only be learned through on-the-job training.



**Photos of Sewage overflowing in the streets in 9-Nissan**

As I look back over that year, I realize that I could easily step back and focus on missions relevant to the assets deemed by the BTB MTOE and its prescribed mission. Just by maintaining situational awareness on the overall brigade mission, we became focused — regardless of our branch -- on assisting and supporting the chain of command in its successful completion. The knowledge and experience that I received from this operation not only increased my ability as an officer but reinforced the idea that you have to be proficient in your assigned job as well as your basic branch at all times. Ensuring that we are flexible enough to do this, within every mission

directed from higher, is how most leaders would define the successful molding of officers in today's Army. -- *MAJ Alexander Fullerton*

## **Conclusion**

As an academic, I have been relatively distant from the theaters of war. I did spend a fair amount of time in my life in the US embassies to Kenya and Tanzania that were destroyed by car bombs in 1998, but I did not witness those terrorist attacks. I have spent a lot of time in neighborhoods with overflowing sewage and piles of trash much like those shown in Major Fullerton's story. Some of the struggle to rectify the unholy messes of developing-world cities seems fairly universal. Certainly, Iraq's faulty urban governance mechanics and the politicization of everyday urban services resonate with matters I have seen in research in Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, or Zambia. What is different, markedly so, is that Iraq is embroiled in war, urban warfare that makes the mundane extraordinary.

Perhaps the most important and extraordinary dimension to the SWET delivery Fullerton details can be put this way: failures in SWET provision can imperil entire missions, but successes in SWET provision, even small local successes like those the Major recounts here, might go quite a way to reversing negative trajectories. Most Americans have no cause to contemplate the bidding processes and interrelationships that development between local governments, engineering firms, or urban service providers in the US. Even for many who do so for a living, there is much in the system that is taken for given. Of course, horrific examples of corruption in these processes in the US exist as well – I grew up in northeastern Pennsylvania and spent enough time both there and in Philadelphia and New Jersey to deny me the chance to pretend otherwise. Yet much like Pennsylvania's Wyoming Valley after the floods of 1972's Tropical Storm Agnes ravaged it, Iraq is burdened by the complete reconstruction not only of urban infrastructural and service systems but of the very social and political networks that make that reconstruction succeed or fail. To fit into a fight, in this context, is to attempt to create a participatory engineering dream from the ground up, physically and socially. This is a daunting task, but one that Major Fullerton's example sheds significant light upon. –*Dr. Garth Meyers*

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## **An Advisor's Experience: C CO, 2/19<sup>th</sup> SFG (A) December '01 to September '02**

**Michael Coker and Pauletta Otis**

Interacting with indigenous civilians and indigenous militaries on a daily basis, and in a way that enhances mission success, force protection, and building democracy, is a role that is a new challenge for most soldiers. Training and preparing soldiers for this cultural interaction is as important as training for the kinetic piece.

Successful interaction between US military forces and the indigenous population is successful when it results in an indigenous citizenry that supports the country and its future. When it is not successful, there is an enhanced possibility that indigenous people will take the side of an insurgency with all of its destructive potential for the country, the region and even US interests in the AO.

The following essay provides valuable insight for the teaching and training of future soldiers who find themselves in advisory roles whether in Afghanistan or elsewhere. This knowledge and understanding is based on experience as well as formal on-the-job training provided by the US Army and other military teaching/ training experiences.

The first insight and suggestion is to work as a part of a team. As a team, observe meetings, discussions and dilemmas with local leaders. After the meetings, provide input to the team's decision maker as to what was observed, various interpretations of what "really happened," and note both the 'normal' and the 'abnormal.' This allows the decision maker to compile and analyze from a number of differing sources which complementary and/or conflicting reports. The local leaders knew that all of the members of the team were involved, understood the situation, and were important to the solutions. It is important to have a designated decision maker so that the team could speak with one voice – at least in public.

The second major suggestion is to understand the competing loyalties in the Area of Operations. Many who first went into Afghanistan after the removal of the USSR and the associated



Mujahidden assumed that the Afghanis would be loyal to a “cause.” What they found out was that there was not over riding loyalty to a cause but that the Afghanis were now loyal to local leaders, warlords, and their associated interests. For American soldiers, this came as something of a shock. Expecting a ‘mirror image’ in other warriors, the Americans had assumed loyalty to the ‘big picture’ – reflecting their own loyalty to concepts such as democracy, patriotism and the ‘good of the nation. Neither removal of the Taliban nor fall of Al Queda provided a unifying cause for Afghani soldiers. Where this came something of a surprise, on further consideration it became apparent that a) some of the original reporting may have been overdrawn, and b) Afghanistan is a rural country with huge transportation and communication challenges partly as a result of the mountainous terrain and partly as a consequence of the climate. Kunar Valley could be another country insofar as the citizens of Kabul are concerned. Citizens from Kunar may have not seen an “official” from Kabul let alone have any loyalty based on interests, allegiances, nationalism or patriotism.

Loyalty, even to the Americans working on their behalf, was also pretty slim and transitory. The warlords that the US forces were working with were not necessarily loyal to the US cause of eradicating Al Qaeda and Taliban. They were often simply interested in receiving American money, aid, military support, and personal aggrandizement. In addition, simply by virtue of American soldiers working with a particular warlord, implied that America backed this warlord, which in turn gave the warlord an increased measure of prestige, honor, and power. Temporary loyalty is not always counterproductive: when used, manipulated, or at least understood, local alliances can be built based on name and support from local chiefs. In one case, the US forces had credibility with the local population of Nangahar simply because a local warlord was identified with the United States’ forces.

One of the other important lessons learned is that people in war zones may use US forces for their own personal gain or that of their people – which may have something or nothing to do with the US mandate. Any information given the US forces by the local population, indigenous soldier, or warlord has to be verified by separate sources. There have been numerous instances where US forces, trusting the ‘source’, took actions that only supported a local interest monger and had nothing to do with the mission. Personal and family vendettas are always a part of local tribal warfare and it is easy for US military forces to be innocently caught up. In Afghanistan, anyone could be called “Al Queda” or “Taliban” and US reaction would be to use force early and well until they recognized that they were to be used only as ‘muscle.’ Diligence is required: a good interpreter helps also. The “terps” are more than translators – they add context, motive, intent, and personal information critical to understanding the local players. The key is to remain aware that the US forces will eventually leave and that the people on the ground will ‘stay.’ This is “their reality,” and “they” will behave in both their own short term and long term interests.

The third lesson concerns human relationships. Men as friends or as soldiers can and do build relationships in war zones that are important, however short-lived. There is a quid-pro-quo aspect to providing aid for a warlords’ people and his loyalty to the person that made this happen. Early on in the Afghanistan conflict, humanitarian aid and equipment drops by US forces that supported local populations were essential to laying the groundwork for future cooperation (There are pictures of some indigenous soldiers wearing US Army “poly pro” as an

outer garment. Poly pro is designed to be worn beneath an outer garment as part of a cold weather uniform. These soldiers, however, wore the poly pro as an outer garment/uniform because they were proud of clothing from the US military. It was a mark of prestige and honor to be seen wearing it.).

Corruption is another subject that is fraught with difficulty. Americans are quick to judge corruption as being ‘wrong,’ ‘evil,’ and ‘criminal.’ Nevertheless, in a war zone, getting anything accomplished may include non-legal and a-legal behaviors. Without the power of a central state and/ or a security police force with arrest, detention and other legal processes, it is difficult to even define the concept. Nevertheless, US forces are under some pretty strict guidelines regarding how money is spent, contracting arrangements, and rates of pay for employees. Afghans understand that US soldiers have rules that they must follow.

Not that corruption is always an ‘in your face’ cultural behavior in Afghanistan. US forces were told by local civilians about vehicle check points where militia would collect a tax from occupants in vehicles, but did not observe this first hand. US military leaders made it a point to tell the local military leader in the area and demand that the extortion stop, but it still occurred. The fifth suggestion concerns human relationships. This seems to be the single most important key to building and maintaining rapport in an Area of Operations. It became apparent that soldiers who grew up on farms, small towns, or the south tended to do well in an advisor environment. This may be related to having a “trusting nature” – which goes along with friendliness and sociability. It was noted that when people were treated fairly, including indigenous soldiers, that there was an immediate payback. Not only did the US personnel gain respect, but on a simply practical note, they gained more “mileage” out of people. The American soldier needs to be as adaptable as a police officer – especially a police officer who works in a multicultural environment dealing with many different situations and ‘types’ of people on a daily basis. The police officer depends on people for information, tips, situation advisement and is required to build relationships with the community and community leaders. This is very much reflective of the ‘new’ military requirements for serving in places like Afghanistan.

A seventh suggestion concerns conflict management: Although trained in Middle East Studies, and familiar enough with the language that neither language nor culture stand in the way of ‘job success,’ the advisor has seldom been trained in “conflict assessment and conflict management.” It was very common to have two or more tribal leaders come at the same time, or sequentially, and ask for support against “the other” or to ask for the US team leader to solve a long-standing dispute between tribal elements. This ranged from marriage disputes to land management, control of mountain passes, access to US goods and services, and a range of other important or trivial arguments. If the American is going to be ‘used’ as judge and jury in indigenous disputes, he needs to be specifically trained to do so.

Suggestions for future teaching and training: It is important to train soldiers to work in specific cultural, religious, social environments. A “cookie cutter” approach to teaching will not work: every AO is different and each soldier’s task in the AO is different. The basic building blocks should focus on the soldier, leader, and job description as applied to the specific AO.

As an example, while in Jalalabad, a US advisor knew that the Governor of Nangahar Province (Haji Qadir) was a former Mujahideen soldier who fought against the Soviets. He also knew that the Governor had a brother named Abdul Haq who was also a Mujahideen soldier. Abdul Haq was killed in Jalalabad by the Taliban when attempted to establish control there (sometime in November or early December 2001). During a negotiating session, a US agency contractor, who did not know these facts, asked Haji Qadir about his brother. Most of the US military team was aware that Qadir's brother was killed, so listened for what Qadir would say. Fortunately Qadir took the question in stride and explained that his brother was dead. The contractor did not know much about Qadir nor the history of the area; the consequences could have been disastrous if Qadir had been offended by the question.

Language training is important but not critical. A soldier's core communication skills are more important. Without those, he cannot interact appropriately even if he knows the language. It takes months or years of training to achieve a level of language proficiency that allows even basic understanding of the language. Understanding the culture requires not a translator, but an interpreter.

Who should teach our soldiers the necessary cultural skills for today's battlefield? How much training should a soldier receive? On today's battlefield, many tactical decisions are made at platoon level and below, yet some of these soldiers receive no cultural training at all. Another way to fill the information gap is by using a cultural advisor at the platoon level. This could be a social scientist or soldier with specific cultural training and capabilities in the area of conflict management.

Whatever the Area of Operations, the future soldier must know and understand the culture of the people, the consequences of crisis and conflict, and how to interact so as to complete the mission successfully.

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## **Some Concluding Remarks on a New Era in Warfare**

**Felix Moos**

Like death and taxes, warfare has become a fact of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, ranging from 15 major wars at the end of 2003 (the United Nations defines “major wars” as conflicts inflicting 1,000 battlefields deaths per year) to insurgencies in India (Naxalite Uprising since 1967), Peru (Shining Path, since 1970s) and Nepal (Maoists, since 1996). Although some have argued that the nature of war has not changed (Hew Strachan, Oxford Today, 2007), this is not necessarily so. Warfare has indeed evolved to become primarily asymmetric. What has stayed true however, is that war, as Clausewitz noted long ago, nevertheless remains “a serious means to a serious end. It is a political act. It always arises from political conditions and is called forth by political motive” (quoted in Anatol Rapoport’s 1968 Clausewitz on War). This is certainly as true in India, Nepal and Peru as it is for the ongoing conflicts engaging the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan. Clausewitz thought that no war should happen if “people acted wisely.” However, how often in real life do ‘the people’ act wisely? Thus, (traditional) war shouldn’t break out suddenly, but asymmetric conflict apparently does.

Current asymmetric conflicts have caught the United States generally, and anthropologists in the United States and elsewhere, unprepared intellectually, emotionally and materially. It requires some considerable ethical agility to identify insurgencies and consequent suicide bombing (perhaps, initially perfected by the Sri Lanka Tamil Tigers/LTTE) and IEDs so successfully employed by insurgents in Iraq, and then copied by the Taliban in Afghanistan, simply with crime rather than an evolved form of warfare. We need to understand this ongoing evolutionary process far better than we do. We need to grasp what has changed and what has not. Non-state actors may still be in the business of war for personal profit, but now, the stakes are often much higher and surely through the evolution in the technology of war, far more efficiently deadly. Although it may be true that by this first decade of the new century few insurgencies have managed to topple existing governments; however, with the evolution of this type of struggle this may not remain so. Asymmetric conflict—even more than traditional war—is not waged with anthropological abstractions, but against a reality that is social, religious, economic, political, and perhaps above all, cultural. It may not be unreasonable to argue that neither US academe nor

the US military have fully comprehended the essence of ‘insurgency’ driven by cultural, religious, ethnic, or simply economic circumstances.

Insurgencies in the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century are far more matters of ethnicity, religion, and ideology than was true for earlier wars of liberation. Such conflicts require a radical new comprehension of the real measure of the forces of culture and language. We can’t just simply attempt to teach, for example, “classes about military values, the law of armed conflict, human rights and the role of a military in a democracy (Garamone 2006, quoted in Kem and Kirby, 2007) in an American-inspired Iraqi ‘Center for Military Values and Principles, and Leadership’ or institute a drug reduction program in Afghanistan by simply destroying poppy fields rather than winning the ‘hearts and minds’ of farmers by buying their crop and/or subsidizing it. Rather than opting for any “either-or” proposition that has been a hallmark of American political and military decision-making, we should find a way to combine cultural ingredients from Iraqi, Afghani and US military cultures. In order to minimize IED incidents it has become a vital necessity to employ “alternative approaches that rely on deep and nuanced understandings of the cultural dynamics of local populations...to engage the civilian populations in efforts to reduce IED activity.” (Dean & Bartels, Improvised Explosive Devices in Iraq). Unfortunately, the United States military and a little informed US public responded to Tamil Tigers’ initial extensive use of suicide belts and IEDs not at all or, at best, much too slowly. Even if today most civilian and military decision leaders agree that better intelligence is essential to reduce the threat of either suicide bombing or IEDs, the necessary cultural and linguistic components for such an improved intelligence are still lacking.

Maxie McFarland (Military Cultural Education, Military Review March-April, 2005) has correctly argued that: “the emerging importance of cultural identity and its inherent frictions make it imperative for soldiers and leaders -- military and civilian -- to understand societal and cultural norms of populaces in which they operate and function. They must appreciate, understand, and respect those norms and use them as tools for shaping operations and the effects they expect to achieve.” Such a call for cultural and linguistic agility in the US Armed Forces is not new; it was repeatedly proposed during the Vietnam War but never really fully implemented. Might we even suggest that the lessons of Vietnam were never learned. Nevertheless, the Vietnam War was an excellent model for a study of a post-WWII insurgency. As American cultural and linguistic illiteracy led to evermore casualties in Iraq by 2005/6, a surge in forces, overcoming the opposition of the Joint Chiefs, was instituted and the ‘Petraeus Factor’ was put in place in order to stop the hemorrhaging. General Petraeus subsequently went on to state: “You cannot kill your way out of an insurgency” (as quoted in TIME/Asia edition, February 8, 2008). Apparently, some US military leaders have now come to recognize that a traditional military response based on force alone is doomed to fail. In addition, these new perceptions about the challenges in Iraq and Afghanistan led the US military to create the ‘Human Terrain System’ emphasizing a greater cultural agility for specially trained teams assisting Brigade commanders with cultural information in decision-making. However, this new intellectual, knowledge-based environment in the US military requires a new, truly cooperative, greatly invigorated partnership with American academe in general and social science/anthropology in particular. Moreover, fundamentally, this new realization, that just maybe brains might be more important than bullets, requires a giant leap in how the US Armed Forces trains their soldiers and prepares Human Terrain Teams for deployment—and uses their experience after deployment. In fighting 4<sup>th</sup>

generation, asymmetric conflicts, cultural agility and foreign language fluency must not be the skill of a selected few soldiers but should become skills valued throughout the US Armed Forces. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, differences between military and academic learning has become ever more insignificant and a new, far more cooperative, relationship should be agreed to by both constituencies and rapidly implemented.

For example, it is equally important for the soldier and the scholar to recognize that religion is no longer simply passed on from one generation to another, rather it has become far more a matter of individual choice. Thus, when people become so deeply, personally involved with their religious faith, then things both good, but often also bad, begin to happen. Religion becomes THE dominant factor of one's everyday existence. To become a martyr becomes easier, and to sacrifice one's life as a suicide bomber or exploding an IED becomes far easier because it is an expression of personal belief. Being loyal to a cause becomes being loyal to one's religion. Not understanding the major AND subtle differences between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, or not to appreciate the fact that Iraqi Kurds are Sunni adherents but are not Arab, endangers an ultimate success of US efforts in Iraq. Not to appreciate the fact that neither Hamas nor Hizbullah are a sectarian organization is as fatal as not understanding the religious differences between Sri Lankan Buddhists and Hindu Tamils or that Catholics kill Protestants in Mexico's Chiapas, or that the PRC now bans Tibetan Buddhist rinpoches from reincarnating without government permission.

To fight 21<sup>st</sup> century insurgencies, traditional military applications apparently are doomed to fail. Not to engage the American public nor the world public in challenging this new form of warfare surely means more casualties, both civilian and military. Shouldn't the more than 10,000 lawyers now employed by the Pentagon be complemented by a commensurate number of anthropologists/social scientists? The overall world security mirrors a plethora of different cultures far more than imaging a global ethical or legal paradigm. A dialogue on Iraq and Afghanistan as facilitated by these Military-Social Science Roundtables can only remind us that a pause in war signals ever an end to it. If we are serious to confront 21<sup>st</sup> century armed conflicts then we must find a new, truly cooperative compact between academe and the military and we must do all we can to continue the dialogue.

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<sup>i</sup> “Civil Disturbance Operations” *FM 3-19.15* 2005: Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C.

<sup>ii</sup> IED’s are devices fabricated and placed in an improvised manner using destructive, lethal, noxious, pyrotechnic, or incendiary chemicals. They are purposefully fabricated with the aim to maim, incapacitate, or destroy through unleashing violent terror. As home made weapons, IED’s may incorporate military stores, but more typically they are fashioned from readily available, nonmilitary components. In some instances they may be cobbled together with home made explosives (HME).

<sup>iii</sup> As McLennan has recently noted, discourse about power and the quest for power “uniquely bridges the gap between academic and popular opinion concerning the way the world works” (2005). This sentiment regarding the centrality of *power* in any social analysis echoes the eminent British philosopher Bertrand Russell’s (1938) cogent observation that the concept of *power* is to social science what *energy* is to physics: our primary life impulse is the interminable “quest for power.”

<sup>iv</sup> While the intention of this essay is not a conceptual or definitional elaboration of *terrorism*, we concur with the UN General Assembly resolution 49/60 that explicitly asserts, “Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable...” (1994).

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<sup>v</sup> The U.S. Armed Forces' doctrinal concepts for the planning and conduct of civil-military operations (CMO) by joint forces is outlined in the U.S. Armed Forces' *Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Operations Joint Publication 3-57* (8 February, 2001). Supplementary information on civil affairs (CA) and CA activities is provided in *JP 3-57.1, Joint Doctrine for Civil Affairs*. In his critical commentary, Grubbs (2003) notes that Joint CMO doctrine has improved following the issuance of Joint Publications 3-57 and 3-57.1, which draw from the numerous lessons learned from domestic and combat operations in which the United States engaged during the 1990s. Nevertheless, Grubbs identifies shortfalls in CMO doctrine necessary "for today's environment" (2003).

<sup>vi</sup> We use the term civilian following the meaning of the word spelled out in the United Nation's Additional Protocol I (1977), and as reflected in customary law, to represent the fundamental distinction between civilians (who are legally protected from attack) on the one hand, and combatants and military targets on the other hand. Those who actively take part in hostilities are deemed combatants. Under international law, if noncombatants engage in the hostilities their legal protection from attack is rescinded.

<sup>vii</sup> On the unintended consequences of US wars, see Hagan and Bickerton (2007), who challenge von Clausewitz's notion that armed conflict is a "rational" continuation of politics. Instead, they underscore that the unintended consequences of wars waged by the US have often been worse than the actual rationale for which the conflict was fought in the first place.

<sup>viii</sup> The term *glocalization* is used to encapsulate the amorphous process whereby global information and flows of things, people and capital interface with local socio-cultural interactions and material formations. Invariably unequal and volatile, this circulatory process is dynamic, and as such "the local" can and does take on "global proportions" or translocal strategic implications.

<sup>ix</sup> Rather than turning to the myriad anthropological figurations of the keyword *culture*, we intentionally draw from the recent US Armed Forces' controversial counterinsurgency manual which benignly frames culture as that which, "influences how people make judgments about what is right and wrong, assess what is important and unimportant, categorize things, and deal with things that do not fit into existing categories" (*FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5 3-7* 2006).

<sup>x</sup> While consistent with the US Armed Forces' capacity to succeed in a military sense in any given AO, the doctrine raises serious questions about the circumstances and very nature of the *legitimate use of force*, especially when it comes to a military intervention's that are manifestly occupational in nature.

<sup>xi</sup> Among others, see Gross's (1948) classic discussion of the peace established at Westphalia.

<sup>xii</sup> IEDs have been in use since at least the Second World War when delayed-fuse and command-detonated explosive devices were employed in 1943-44 by Allied Forces to disrupt Axis transport lines by derailling scores of German trains.

<sup>xiii</sup> This point can also be made regarding the "social life of things" associated with those individuals of interest interviewed, especially following an IED incident.

<sup>xiv</sup> The Prisoners Dilemma got its name from the following hypothetical situation: imagine two criminals arrested under the suspicion of having committed a crime together. However, the police do not have sufficient proof in order to have them convicted. The two prisoners are isolated from each other, and the police visit each of them and offer a deal: the one who offers evidence against the other one will be freed. If none of them accepts the offer, they are in fact cooperating against the police, and both of them will get only a small punishment because of lack of proof [cooperates]. They both gain. However, if one of them betrays [defects] the other one, by confessing to the police, the defector will gain more, since he is freed; the one who remained silent, on the other hand, will receive the full punishment, since he did not help the police, and there is sufficient proof. If both betray, both will be punished, but less severely than if they had refused to talk. The dilemma resides in the fact that each prisoner has a choice between only two options, but cannot make a good decision without knowing what the other one will do (see <http://pespmc1.vub.ac.be/PRISDIL.html>)



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<sup>xv</sup> On this matter, Wax and Moos write, “[w]hat is strikingly paradoxical is for persons to advocate that the United States intervene militarily in situations of civil strife, like Bosnia, Kosovo, and Rwanda, but who then dissociate themselves and their students from working with military or other pertinent agencies” (2006:13). Likewise, the IHR community is right to deplore the abuses committed in Iraq (and Afghanistan) in the name of the occupying Coalition Forces, yet many prominent human rights organizations, such as Amnesty International, are calling for a military intervention in Darfur as part of a humanitarian and peace keeping efforts. Some commentators (e.g. Mamdani 2007) seem justified in pointing to the hypocrisy of this effort, which selectively emphasize human suffering say in Darfur, but are moot when it comes to the atrocities and scale of human suffering in other areas of Africa, such as is underway in the Western Sahara, or the Congo region.

<sup>xvi</sup> For Carrithers, *Zerrissenheit* is best understood, not as an aspect of a fragmented “and fatally flawed world” as Hegel thought. Instead, it should be considered in the sense provided by Adorno, with Carrithers' caveat that this is “a natural condition of human life” not merely a pathological concomitant of global capitalism (2005:435).

<sup>xvii</sup> The Iraqi Coalition Causality Count reports that over 1600 US fatalities have been caused by the burgeoning use of IEDs in Iraq since outbreak of the war. This does not include the IED fatalities among the more than one thousand slain private contractors who have had died in Iraq, nor the innumerable local casualties, and thousands of combatants and civilians alike who have been maimed or killed by these explosive devices since the outset of the war in Iraq.

<sup>xviii</sup> The authors have no knowledge of the extent to which this type of CMO has been used since the departure of CAT A 25 in the Spring of 2006.

<sup>xx</sup>The US military published on counterinsurgency operations prior to its entry into World War II (see USMC1940) United States Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual*.

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